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Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin visits the civil administration base at the Erez checkpoint yesterday. Chief of the General Staff Lt.-Gen. Ehud Barak is behind the premier. (AP)

Jericho closed to outsiders for 24 hours

NON-RESIDENTS of Jericho and out-of-town vehicles have been barred from entering the city for 24 hours by OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Ian Biran. The order took effect at 5 p.m. yesterday.

The decision followed the detention of five Jews by Palestinian Police during three separate incidents in Jericho yesterday, marking the first time Palestinian policemen have arrested Jews since the implementation of the Jericho/Gaza First agreements.

Four of the Jews who were carrying guns had them confiscated. They were all released shortly after being detained, and their guns returned. The Palestinian Police has apologized for the incidents.

After consultation with Palestinian policemen, including deputy police commander Sa'ad al-Najri, IDF officers recommended that the police force be allowed time to further organize and get better acquainted with the powers and authority granted it in the Cairo agreement.

An official IDF statement said that Biran accepted the recommendations and decided to

Action by IDF after local police detain 5 Jews, confiscate weapons

HERB KEINON and ALON PINKAS

impose the one-day ban.

One of those arrested, Arye Shahar, the security officer of Moshav Na'ama, just north of Jericho, was shopping with a friend when a Palestinian policeman approached him.

"He asked me very aggressively if I was armed," Shahar told Israel Radio. "I said yes, and he told me to give him my gun. I told him I wouldn't give it to him, and that if he wanted it, I would give it to him at the police station. When he saw I was not going to give it to him, he put his hand on the trigger of his gun. I saw that it was not worth starting up, although if we had wanted to, we could have shot and killed him. But that's not what we were looking for or wanted, so I gave him my gun."

Shahar said the policeman frisked his friend, Yair Yosef, also from Na'ama, and took his pistol as well. Shahar said the policeman led

them "like sheep" to the police station some 300 meters away, all the while pointing his Kalashnikov at their backs.

During the day the Palestinian police also briefly detained Arye Yovav of Vered Yericho, and two Lod men who came to the city to sell used tires.

David Elhayani, head of the Jordan Valley Settlements Committee, said he welcomed Biran's decision. "Let them stew in their own juice," he said. "We don't want them here, and we don't want to go there."

The Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza issued a statement saying "this is another violation of the agreement on the part of the PLO police, proving once again that the PLO terrorists cannot be trusted."

Council spokesman Aharon Domb said the council will organize groups of armed Jews to go into the city if necessary to ensure that it remains open to Jews. "If a Palestinian policeman would have stopped me with a loaded weapon, I would have shot him," he said.

Jon Immanuel contributed to this report.

Rabin rejects order by Arafat canceling Israeli law in areas

"THERE will be no one-sided infringements" of the Cairo agreement, and if there are, "Israel has all the means to insist they be corrected," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said during a visit to Gaza yesterday.

Rabin was responding to an announcement published by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in the eastern Jerusalem press canceling laws enforced by Israel since 1967. The order appeared to violate the Cairo agreement.

The executive order by Arafat, printed on page four of *al-Kuds*, said: "those laws and orders which were legislated before June 5, 1967." Since that day Israel has imposed more than 2,000 military orders.

Arafat's announcement said that his order was valid "in the Palestinian lands - the West Bank and Gaza Strip, until their unification." However, the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, even when it begins functioning, does not extend beyond Gaza and Jericho.

The announcement also instructed civil and religious courts in Gaza and Jericho to operate under laws that existed before 1967.

Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yoel Singer told *The Jerusalem Post* that Arafat's order had no validity, since neither he alone nor the Palestinian Authority could unilaterally abrogate Israeli military regulations.

Rabin, in his first trip to Gaza since the IDF pullback, said the continuation of the peace process begun in Oslo is inevitable, but "is connected to the ability of the Palestinians to realize their obligations in Gaza and Jericho." This

JON IMMANUEL

includes a commitment to all agreements since Israel and the PLO exchanged letters of mutual recognition in September, he said.

Article 7.9 of the Cairo agreement states that "laws and orders in effect in the Gaza Strip and Jericho area prior to the signing of this agreement shall remain in force, unless amended or abrogated in accordance with this agreement."

Article 7.3 states that "legislation promulgated by the authority shall be communicated to a legislative subcommittee" in which Israel has the right to decide whether it exceeds the authority of the Palestinian Authority.

Arafat signed his order as "president of the Palestinian National Authority and head of the executive committee of the PLO." But Arafat's executive position is irrelevant, said Singer. "Arafat has no more legislative power than Rabin," he said.

Gaza lawyer Fraih Abu Meadeen, a member of the Palestinian Authority council, told Reuter, "This order in effect cancels most Israeli military orders dealing with civilian life, and restores the situation to the days before the Israeli occupation."

"This is the first step towards consolidating our national authority on the ground in Gaza and Jericho," he added.

Arafat is expected to announce the names of the 24 members of the Palestinian Authority after a meeting today in Tunis which many of the 17 identified members will attend. However, highly placed Palestinian sources here said many of those approached were hesitant to join because they consider the authority's powers too limited and Arafat's role too dominant. "Those who are anxious to join are not considered credible," he said.

At the Nahal Oz press conference, Rabin pointed out that Arafat is committed to "canceling clauses in the Palestinian Covenant which contradict the contents of the letter he sent to me, and my response, which led to mutual recognition between us," at the next session of the Palestine National Council. The clauses relate to the elimination of Israel.

Rabin said he had no authorized information on when the session would take place or where, but Arafat adviser Dr. Ahmed Tibi said Monday it would be in Gaza "soon," and Nabil Sha'ath, Arafat's chief negotiator, confirmed this.

Rabin went to Gaza to review the new IDF deployment and security systems being built to divide the strip from Israel. He warned that there can be no complete security from terror attacks, but he said the new arrangements, including an electronic fence, will be "the best possible prevention" against them.

Rabin commended the action of a Palestinian policeman who fired at the wheels of an Israeli car near the Erez checkpoint on Monday, saying he had acted "as we had demanded" after the murder of two IDF soldiers last Friday. He said Israel had asked the police to set up roadblocks 200 meters from Israeli positions and check every vehicle coming from the direction of Gaza for weapons. The Israeli car, "against instructions and the law," did not stop as required, Rabin said.

Rabin called the first week of Palestinian autonomy a good start. "If the system of coordination and cooperation continues to develop as it has so far, I see that as a good start and a good chance for the future," he said.

Ben-Porat hits back after attacks by Rabin and attorney-general

STATE Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat reacted furiously yesterday to attacks by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair.

Rabin had entered the fray on Monday, when Ben-Porat asked the attorney-general to consider opening a criminal investigation into Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer's activities. One item in her scathing report on the ministry concerned a NIS 1.4 million grant to Beit Palmah. Not only was this project ineligible for ministry funding, because it is not a public institution, she noted, but both Ben-Eliezer and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat serve on its board.

In response, Rabin accused Ben-Porat of trying to make the report seem worse than it was, and of meddling in government policy.

"Who is she to speak about the Palmah?" Rabin reportedly said at a coalition meeting.

"It's been a long time since I've been this perplexed as to how to respond," Ben-Porat told the Knesset state control committee yesterday. "I wrote my report according to the facts on the ground, with no connection to any particular government. The prime minister is also my prime minister, and I am obliged to respect him. But to a certain degree, he is also obliged to respect a governmental institution [the State Comptroller's Office]."

"I did the best I could to expose the defects [in the government's

EVELYN GORDON

activities] to the Knesset. Could I have made a mistake? Of course."

However, she added, the Knesset has never found a substantive error in any of her previous reports.

"It's a shame the prime minister lost control of himself," she said. Ben-Yair, she added, is part of the executive branch, and therefore subject to her criticism.

"But I think there needs to be mutual respect between the holders of these two offices [the attorney-general and the state comptroller]," she said. "Why he went to the press I can't understand."

Justice Minister Liba'i defends State Comptroller, page 2

The comptroller said she was particularly hurt by Ben-Yair's accusation that she behaved inconsistently on Monday by mentioning Ben-Eliezer's name, after saying the week before that she would not specify the people she suspected of criminal wrongdoing. Ben-Porat said she named Ben-Eliezer only in response to a direct question from the state control committee, and she told the committee that her answer was intended for its ears only.

"If it got out to the general public, I'm sorry," she said. "But [Ben-Yair] depicted me as someone who says one thing and does the opposite, and that isn't correct."

The committee, attended almost entirely by opposition MKs, was quick to take Ben-Porat's side.

"The comptroller is responsible solely to the Knesset, and the Knesset must defend the comptroller," said Dan Tichon (Likud). "If we silence the state comptroller, we will destroy democracy."

Only Ra'anana Cohen (Labor), the sole coalition MK present, objected to the letter. While Rabin's words were out of line, he said, the whole issue was none of the Knesset's business.

"The dispute is between the comptroller and the prime minister," he said. "It should [be resolved] by them and the attorney-general. [By sending the letter] we are politicizing this committee. You're trying to exploit what was said for more than it's worth."

Meanwhile, legal commentator Moshe Negbi, in an interview with Israel Radio yesterday, said that if the fight between Ben-Porat and Ben-Yair were not resolved in Ben-Porat's favor, Israel was likely to deteriorate into a mere "banana republic."

"I am very worried by this dispute," he said, noting that since only Ben-Yair has the power to act on the comptroller's findings, Ben-Porat cannot "stop the deterioration of public morality" without his help.

"The attorney-general doesn't understand that he isn't the government's defense attorney," Negbi added.

New 'centrist' Labor group launched

DAN IZENBERG

A GROUP of 14 "centrist" Labor MKs yesterday launched a battle for the soul of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by joining forces with a new public group called "The Third Way" to fight for continued control of most or all of the Golan Heights, Jordan Valley, Gush Etzion, and "greater" Jerusalem.

The MKs and the non-partisan movement oppose continued rule over the Palestinians. "The public is fed up with the extremism of left and right," said Golan Heights settlement leader Yehuda Harel. "We seek a compromise."

The MKs, many of whom supported Rabin in his leadership fight against Shimon Peres, were careful not to criticize the prime minister, whom they hope to win over to their side in the struggle with party doves, including the Mashov and Kfar Hayarok circles.

Nevertheless, they took public issue with two recent dovish statements by Rabin, who declared that settlements do not contribute to security and described the IDF as an "army of occupation."

"I don't think there is increasing dovishness in Rabin's actions," said Emanuel Zissman. "However, there is in his statements. We didn't enter Gaza to capture it; we entered it to defend ourselves."

Avigdor Kahalani warned that "the government is sliding leftwards very quickly, and this organization aims to stop the slide." The 14 MKs included Economics Minister Shimon Shetret, Zissman, Kahalani, Eli Goldschmidt, Masha Lubelski, Gedalya Gal, Ra'anana Cohen, Ori Orr, Yosef Vanunu, Yoram Lass, Shlomo Bubbut, Avi Yehzekel, and Salah Tarif.

Zissman said five other MKs - Micha Goldman, Ephraim Sneh, Gideon Saguy, Rafi Elul, and Eli Dayan - also expressed sympathy for the new group, comprised of representatives of internal middle of the road circles including Hoffi, the Central Stream, Dor Hahemshech, and Efat, which, until now, have not acted in concert.

"This is a historic achievement of awakening at the last minute," said Kahalani. "I have often felt that only a few of us are concerned with security. I hope it's not too late."

The MKs chose to reveal the new group during a meeting with leaders of the Third Way, an organization made up of Labor Party activists and sympathizers including Harel, Haim Guri, and Shlomo Hillel. The group also includes Likud member Yossi Peled, Yit'ud leader Gonen Seggev, and Meimad leader Rabbi Yehuda Amital.

The Third Way sees itself as an alternative to the Likud and the right-wing national religious movement on the one hand, and left-wing groupings, including Meretz and the Labor doves, on the other.

Shetret spelled out some of the policy aims, including:

- control over greater Jerusalem by building housing to connect Jerusalem with Ma'aleh Adumim, Givat Ze'ev, and Gush Etzion;
- control over a strip of land from Beit She'an to Ein Gedi wide enough to include all of the Jewish settlements;
- permanent military and civilian control over part or all of the Golan Heights.

Kahalani said he would not vote for moves which contradict the current Labor Party platform.

Drama of Operation Solomon recalled

HUNDREDS of Ethiopian immigrants gathered yesterday in Yavne with some of the air force pilots who flew them here in Operation Solomon, which took place exactly three years before.

It was a moving meeting as the immigrants expressed their gratitude to the government, the Jewish Agency, and the various branches of the security services which had plucked them out of war-torn Ethiopia and brought them here safely.

BATSHEVA TSUR

"As the son of Holocaust survivors and someone who was born in a DP camp, it was an overwhelming personal experience to bring the remnants of this living Jewish community here on an Israeli plane," recalled reserve pilot Moshe Shaked. "Even the most cynical among the airmen involved could not restrain their emotions."

"We landed in the middle of a war, and the fog surrounding the airport was symbolic of the uncertainty surrounding the operation."

Shaked described how more than 400 immigrants had climbed in absolute silence and with supreme self-control into the plane

which normally carries 180 passengers. "As we flew north, with enemy territory all around, we heard over our communications systems Hebrew being spoken in aircraft traveling in both directions," he said of the 31-hour flight.

"When we finally announced that we had reached Jerusalem, or Zion, as the immigrants then knew it, the total silence was shattered by outbursts of joyous crying. You knew you had finally made it," he told the immigrants who greeted the recollections with loud applause.

People from all over the country took part in the rescue operation, Shaked said, "but the one place

(Continued on Page 2)

Stocks plunge again

STOCKS fell more than 3 percent yesterday, continuing a three-week slide that has wiped out about a sixth of the market's paper value.

The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange's Two-Sided Index stood at 189.67 at the end of trading, down from 196.20, the exchange announced. Full report, Page 9

Mecca disaster

DUBAI (Reuter) - Hundreds of Moslems performing the annual hajj pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia were feared killed or wounded in a stampede during a ritual to stone the devil, news reports and diplomats said yesterday.

"Some people say a few hundred and others say much less. It is not clear," said an Asian diplomat in a telephone call. Full story, Page 4

WTC bombers jailed

NEW YORK (Reuter) - Three of the four Moslem fundamentalists convicted of bombing the World Trade Center were each sentenced yesterday to 240 years in prison.

US District Judge Kevin Duffy said that 180 years of each sentence against Mohammad Salameh, Nidal Ayyad and Mahmud Abouhalima was based on the life expectancy of the six people who died in the blast. Full story, Page 5

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Shahak: Soldiers were entitled to pursue attackers after Erez checkpoint shooting

TROOPS were entitled to chase the Palestinian terrorists who killed two soldiers last week near the Erez checkpoint according to the Israel-PLO agreement, Deputy Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Amnon Shahak said yesterday.

Speaking to the Knesset foreign affairs and defense committee, Shahak said the army was unable to pursue the terrorists for other reasons, but did not elaborate.

He added that the heads of the intelligence branch of the Palestinian Police, Jibril Rajoub and Mohammed Dahlan, plan to take action against Hamas to prevent it from attacking Israeli targets. So far, however, the police have not begun impounding weapons held

by unauthorized Palestinians. "The army is entitled and must give chase after terrorist attacks," a source who attended the meeting quoted Shahak as saying. "Had we been able to do so on Friday, we would have, and this is in accordance with the agreement. The question is whether it was possible to give chase."

"There are still misunderstandings. We cannot pursue into Gaza City. However, in cases involving immediate pursuit after a shooting attack when we spot the car, we have the right to open fire, according to the agreement."

So far, some 3,200 police have been deployed and another 2,800 are expected soon. One thousand

DAN IZENBERG

more police will arrive within the next three months and 2,000 are to be recruited locally.

According to Shahak, all of the police presently deployed were recruited abroad and are unfamiliar with the streets and alleyways of Gaza. Many of them are also relatively old. "It is not a young, exuberant and well-trained force," said Shahak.

In contrast, Rajoub and Dahlan – responsible for preventing terrorist violations of the Israel-PLO agreement in Jericho and Gaza – are well-acquainted with the territory and should be operating soon, said the deputy chief of staff.

"They have plans for taking action against Hamas," said Shahak. "In some areas, they will try to gain control over them and prevent attacks. I don't know whether they will succeed."

Shahak added, however, that there was confusion over the prerogatives and hierarchy of the four men – Rajoub, Dahlan, Amin el-Hindi and Mustafa Sakr – currently in charge of intelligence.

He said that although for the time being Gen. Nasser Yusuf is in charge of the police, many personnel changes are in store. "The matter of appointments is typical of the PLO," said Shahak. "They make manipulative use of appointments and the seizing of

power bases so that the hierarchy is unclear, particularly in the intelligence branch."

Shahak refused to elaborate on whether the army had contingency plans to recapture Gaza if the PLO violated the agreement. "The prime minister has instructed the army on what to do in case of any deterioration of the situation in the territories," said Shahak. "The army has plans and solutions to potential developments and I do not intend to divulge details about any of them."

However, OC Southern Command Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilnay admitted on ITN's Channel One last night that a contingency plan for re-entering Gaza did exist.

Shahal: Palestinian security men not allowed in Jerusalem

BILL HUTMAN and him

PALESTINIAN security personnel or political "ruling bodies" will not be tolerated in Jerusalem, Police Minister Moshe Shahal insisted yesterday.

Shahal vowed to shut down "those Palestinian organizations that should not be operating in the capital," if any are found, and to arrest any Palestinian operating in police or other security capacity.

He was replying to criticism by opposition MKs of the activities of Orient House, the PLO headquarters in Jerusalem, and reports of Palestinian police in the capital.

"We will not allow Palestinian ruling bodies to operate in Jerusalem," Shahal said.

"We have heard the rumors about people providing security for Palestinian officials [in Jerusalem]," Shahal added. "If they prove to be true, we will not hesitate to make arrests."

He said the activities of Orient House, where foreign dignitaries

are received by PLO leaders and Palestinian security officers have operated for years, are being investigated to see whether they are illegal, or violate the regulations set down in agreements with the PLO.

Meanwhile, some 100 Fatah Hawks have been recruited into the Palestinian Police, a senior police official was quoted as saying.

The men, who had been on the IDF's wanted list, are now being trained by Palestine Liberation Army officers prior to joining the force," the source said.

Peace Watch, a non-partisan group which monitors the implementation of the Israel-PLO accords, said this was a violation of those accords.

Hamas sources quoted by the Jordanian newspaper *al-Bilad* said group members and supporters have also been instructed to join the force.

Olmert refuses to condemn deputy's call to kill Arafat

BILL HUTMAN

DEPUTY Mayor Shmuel Meir was making a "private statement" when he called for the Distinguished Citizen of Jerusalem Award to go to whoever assassinates Yasser Arafat, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said yesterday.

Olmert declined to condemn Meir, or comment further on the matter, according to a City Hall statement.

Meir, an outspoken right-wing leader in the city council, called for the prestigious award to go to the person who killed Arafat during a recent meeting of his National Religious Party, the *Ha'aretz* newspaper reported yesterday.

This evening, the city council is to discuss what steps to take in reaction to Arafat's call for a jihad on Jerusalem.

Olmert has vowed to help organize a massive demonstration if the government gives the go-ahead for the PLO chairman to visit the city. Such a visit, however, is not expected soon, according to both Israeli and PLO officials.

"An invitation [for Arafat to visit Jerusalem] will not be extended during this period of our relations," Police Minister Moshe Shahal told reporters yesterday.

Shahal said he did not believe Arafat would try to visit the city with such a government invitation.

Peres calls for transfer of funds to Palestinians

THE international community must make an effort to ensure the ongoing funding of the Palestinian Authority and Palestinian Police, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said yesterday during a meeting in New York with a group of UN ambassadors.

He also called on the members of the Security Council to immediately transfer funds to the Palestinians.

Peres noted that despite the fact that Jericho and Gaza are no longer Israel's responsibility, Israel is continuing to pay the salaries of the Palestinian Authority workers to prevent a crisis.

Ambassador to the UN Gad Ya'acobi said the meeting – in which Morocco's ambassador participated – reflected a substantial change in Israeli-UN relations. (Iim)

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

The weekly meeting of the English speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place at 1:00 p.m. today, at the YMCA, King David St. The agenda: Scholarship Day.

ARRIVALS

For the annual meeting of the Board of Governors of Tel Aviv University – From Brazil: Prof. Jose Goldenberg, for the inauguration of the Jose Goldenberg Chair in Atmospheric Physics. From Germany: Dr. Robin Fritz and Mrs. Agi Kroll. Dr. Mueller-Vogt.

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CHAIM DAVID FROHLICH

a memorial service and unveiling will take place on Friday, May 27, 1994, at 11:00 a.m., at the Sgula Cemetery, Petah Tikva.

The Family

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An *azkariah* and unveiling will take place on Sunday, May 29, 1994 (19 Siwan 5754) at 5:00 p.m., at Eretz HaChaim Cemetery, Beit Shmesh, Shimon Junction.

Esther M. Frimer
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MKs claim 'safe passage routes' via Israel will lead to increase in terrorist attacks

BILL HUTMAN

THE "safe passage routes" to link Gaza and Jericho will open the way for terror attacks in Israel, MKs from across the political spectrum warned yesterday, at a heated Knesset interior committee meeting.

For the first time, police at the meeting publicly presented a map detailing the four safe passage routes.

Three of the routes pass by Jerusalem, while the fourth reaches Jericho by the Dead Sea road. All the routes enter Gaza at the Erez checkpoint and Jericho at the Vered Jericho junction.

The "northern route" passes near Kiryat Malachi, the Re'em and Nachshon junctions to the Beit Horon highway. From there

the route passes near the village of El Jib, the Neveh Ya'acov neighborhood in north Jerusalem, to the Jericho road.

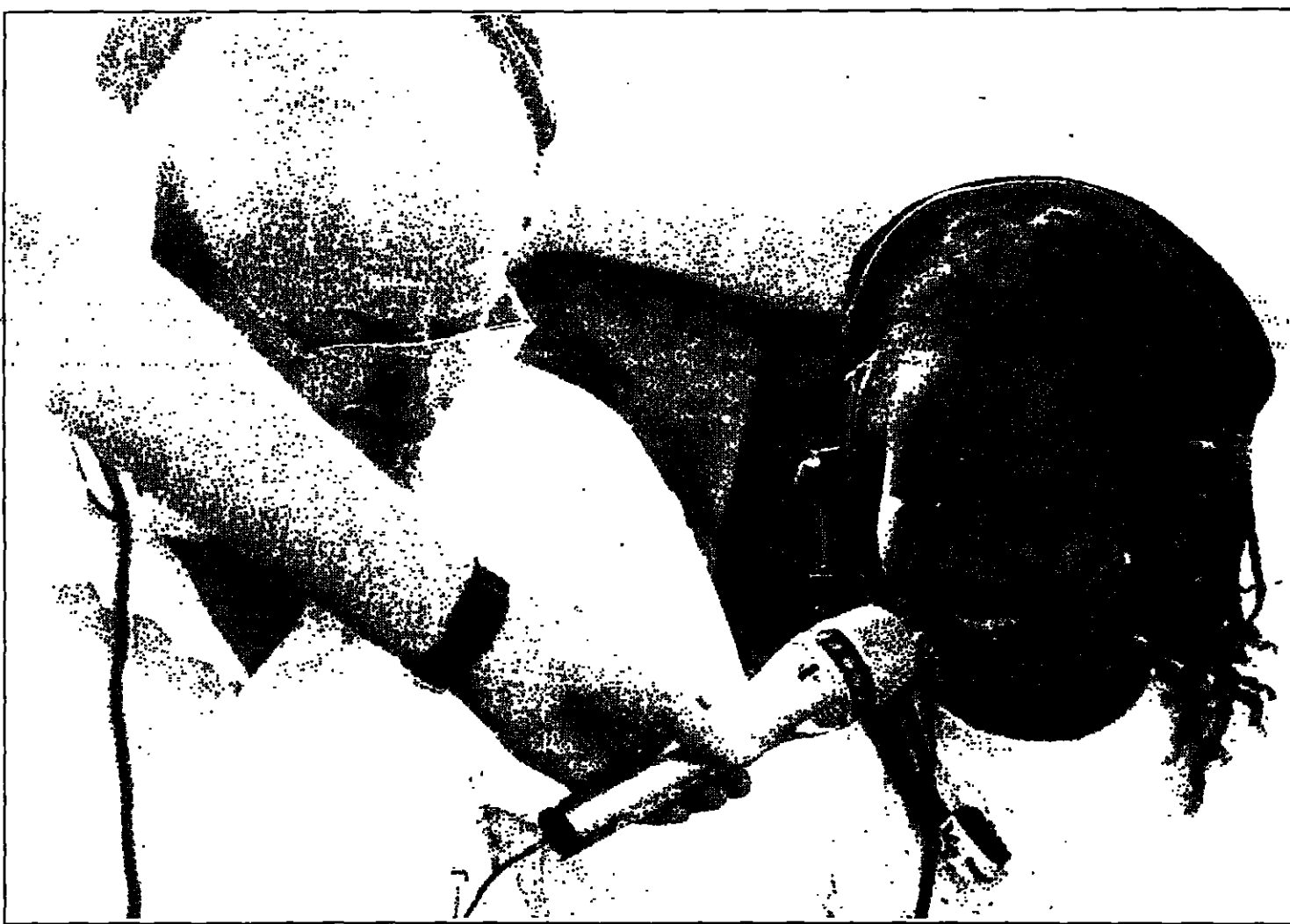
The "central route" is through the Ashkelon Junction, east towards Tarkuniyah village just outside Hebron, past Bethlehem to the Jerusalem bypass road to Abu Dis and on to the Jericho Road.

"Southern route A" passes Kibbutz Yad Mordechai and Netivot, to Beit Kama, and then on to the Jerusalem bypass road just south of the capital. "Southern route B" crosses directly east from Gaza past Arad to the Shefkh Zohar Junction, which links

up with the Dead Sea Road.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said that police were prepared to open the routes, once the go-ahead was given by the government. However, the computer system slated to be used to monitor Palestinian vehicles using the road is still at least three or four months from being ready.

Committee chairman Yehoshua Matza called on Shahal to delay the opening of the routes until steps were made to improve security. "We don't want to have to call you back here in several months and demand answers," because of a breach in security along the routes, Matza said.



A young Ethiopian immigrant and Absorption Minister Yair Tsaban answer questions from an Army Radio reporter. (Nissim Shorer)

OPERATION SOLOMON

(Continued from Page One)

that sent the most members of the air crews was Yavne."

"Operation Solomon" took a mere 31 hours," said Micha Friedman, the key figure in planning the exodus on behalf of the Jewish Agency and is known by the community as "the father of the Ethiopians." But, he said, "the real operation is taking much longer, the operation to fully absorb the community into Israeli society."

Feldman appealed to teachers to spend more time with Ethiopian children and employers to give community members work. He hoped that housing would be found for them in good neighborhoods, so that the children would

grow up with the best chances for success.

Addisu Messale, head of the United Ethiopian Jewish organizations, said that 75 percent of the olim on the operation had been children. "Here we are, recalling the dramatic moments, but the real test will come with the social and educational absorption of the immigrants," he said. "We are aware that there are gaps to be closed."

Messale called on other towns to follow the example set by Yavne "which has welcomed and absorbed its immigrants with open arms."

Certificates of appreciation for their roles in the operation were presented to the pilots by Absorption Minister Yair Tsaban and Yavne Mayor Yehuda Beroz.

At a ceremony in Jerusalem last night, outstanding students and soldiers from the Ethiopian community were awarded certificates of merit.

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the king of spades, ace of hearts, nine of diamonds and ten of clubs.

Winning numbers

In yesterday's weekly Lotto drawing, the winning numbers were 19, 27, 30, 35, 37, and 48, and the additional number was 25.

Correction

Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu did not attend the "Concert in the Park" rally in New York, as reported in Monday's paper.

Liba'i supports Ben-Porat against Rabin

SARAH HONIG

STATE Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat won support for her position from Justice Minister David Liba'i, who said yesterday she had acted "fully and strictly within the law."

Liba'i thereby pitted himself directly against Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair.

Rabin attacked Ben-Porat on Monday, basing his criticism on Ben-Yair's accusations that she had deliberately exaggerated the impression of the gravity of the findings in her annual report regarding the Housing Ministry, while she was vague and had produced a lightweight report.

Ben-Yair especially complained about her statements that she plans to turn over some of her findings to him, though she did not specify which ones, thereby fostering the impression of corruption and criminal offenses.

Despite Rabin's unprecedented attack on her, Liba'i said he "fully and unstintingly backs the state comptroller. She did nothing that was not within the law. The law entitles her to turn over her findings to the attorney-general, if she deems that there is room for a criminal investigation and possibly the filing of charges against given officials. But the law does not demand that she make public these recommendations, and that she spell out the names of those against whom she had recommended the attorney-general open an investigation."

Tourism Minister Uzi Baram also criticized Rabin's attacks on Ben-Porat, warning that "no one has the right to determine whether the comptroller's report is substan-

tive or not. Just how severe the findings are judged to be, remains something which it is up to the state comptroller alone to evaluate. If she considers what she has unearthed to be of importance and of sufficient gravity to invite possible prosecution, then it would be at the least imprudent for the prime minister to take her on. After all, she has a very considerable public standing, and attacking her would be interpreted as killing the messenger."

Economics Minister Shimon Shetret, who often constitutes a one-man opposition inside the cabinet, also argued that "the state comptroller did everything according to the strictest letter of the law."

Other ministers had similar comments when questioned by *The Jerusalem Post*, but they adamantly refused to be quoted.

One minister noted the unpleasant exchange/Monday between Rabin and MK Dalia Itzik at the Labor Knesset faction session.

Itzik had come out in defense of MK Hagai Merom, who asked Rabin not to continue his offensive against Ben-Porat. Rabin responded with a belittling gesture, which prompted Itzik to demand: "Don't make such gestures. You are an expert in insults. It is our task to bring the public's sentiments to you and you must pay attention, even if it's not to your liking."

Rabin then shouted at her: "Don't you give me marks," to which she retorted: "The voters will hand you your report card. It is time for her who said: 'I will run things. I will decide. I will navigate.' to examine herself."

Shapira, Porush wrangle over rotation agreement

SARAH HONIG

AGUDA MK Avraham Shapira announced yesterday he has no intention of resigning to facilitate a rotation agreement inside the United Torah Judaism Knesset faction.

Shapira says MK Menachem Porush should vacate his Knesset seat, while Porush suggests they toss a coin.

The Council of Torah Sages is expected to rule within the next few days on this latest dispute threatening the delicate balance of the four-MK UTJ bloc.

The controversy's seeds were sown shortly prior to the 1992 elections, when it was agreed that if less than five UTJ MKs were elected "either the first (Shapira) or third (Porush) on the list, as well as the fourth (MK Shmuel Halpert), will resign from the Knesset in two years to make way for the fifth (Avraham Verdiger of the Poalei Aguda faction) and the sixth (Moshe Gafni of Degel Hatorah) on the UTJ list."

Shapira, Porush and Halpert are all members of the Aguda faction, the UTJ's largest.

The ambiguity of the original agreement has now produced a situation in which only Halpert admits that he must step down, but in which neither Shapira nor Por-

ush is willing to yield.

If neither of them quits, Degel Hatorah and Poalei Aguda are expected to exert heavy pressure on Aguda. Even Aguda insiders predict that the Torah Sages will have no choice but to order one of Aguda's two elder statesmen to step down, this despite the fact that the rotation deal will leave Aguda under-represented.

Once the rotation deal is implemented, there will be two Degel MKs (Avraham Ravitz and Gafni), one from Poalei Aguda (Verdiger) and only one from Aguda (either Shapira or Porush).

Shapira argues that he represents the largest group within Aguda – the Gur Hassidim – and must therefore remain in the Knesset. Porush points out that he is one of the most veteran and active MKs and that it is unjust to make him the sacrificial lamb.

Yet another controversy is just when the rotation should take place. Degel insists on June 1, which corresponds with the Hebrew date of the agreement. But Aguda says it is only July 13, which was the Gregorian date on which the agreement was signed in 1992.

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY The Chaim Sheba Medical Center

The Maurice and Gabriela Goldschleger Eye Research Institute

Awarding of the Professor Richard Stein Memorial Prize

Lecture
Professor Manuel del-Carro, M.D.
University of Rochester, New York, U.S.A.

Neural Retinal Transplantation:
Past Perspectives, Current Developments, and Human Applications

Prize Winner:
Professor Uri Yinon
Head of Physiology Laboratory
The Maurice and Gabriela Goldschleger Eye Research Institute

Address and Awarding of the Prize
Mr. Maurice Goldschleger

on Friday, May 27, 1994, at 11 a.m. at the Fastlight Auditorium, Mexico Building
Tel Aviv University Campus, Ramat Aviv
Entrance through Frenkel Gate (7) and Dan Bochner Gate (8)
- The public is invited -

Vatican official makes concession on Jerusalem

HAIM SHAPIRO

CARDINAL Edward Cassidy, president of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jewish People, made an apparent concession to Jewish spiritual sovereignty over Jerusalem that went far beyond the Vatican position.

Speaking at a press conference to mark the meeting of the commission with the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) in Jerusalem this week, he sought to explain why the two bodies had never met in the city before.

"The Catholic side would have had to have been invited by the Jewish side," Cassidy said, explaining that when the two bodies met in the Vatican or other locations that are considered Catholic venues, the Catholics issued the invitation.

In the past, the Vatican had insisted that Jerusalem belongs to all three of the monotheistic faiths. Recently, the Vatican has called for international guarantees for the holy places in the city.

Dr. Israel Singer, secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress, speaking for IJCIC, said that many of the Jewish partners had felt that it problematic to meet in Jerusalem. The present meeting had been stated while the feeling of euphoria over the Vatican recognition of Israel still prevailed, he said.

The gathering also has an unprecedented degree of Orthodox

Jewish participation. Among those taking part are former IDF chief rabbi Mordechai Piron, Rabbi Haskel Lookstein, past president of the Rabbinical Council of America, former chief rabbi of France Rene Sirat, and former British Chief Rabbi Lord Immanuel Jakobovitz, as well as former Irish chief rabbi David Rosen, a regular participant in inter-religious forums.

On Monday, the Catholic participants met with Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau.

The meeting is to culminate in a joint statement on the Holocaust. Cassidy said that that statement would be the basis for a Vatican statement, which would result later in a pronouncement by the pope.

"The Shoa was in an area that was basically Christian and much of it was Catholic. The Church couldn't ignore it. It had to respond as the Church to questions raised by the Shoa," he said.

This response, he said, had always been blocked to some degree by the fact that there were no relations between the Vatican and Israel. He described the present talks as going beyond solving specific problems to a discussion of common concerns, in particular those regarding ecology and the family.

"We can work together as two religious communities, communities based on faith, and not just ethnic communities," he said.

Man held for blackmail of dairy chief

RAINE MARCUS

TEL AVIV police this week nabbed an alleged blackmailer, who threatened to poison Strauss dairy products if company director Michael Strauss did not pay him \$200,000.

Strauss filed a complaint with the police, saying that since Saturday he had been receiving threatening phone calls at his home and office from a man who said he had AIDS and would poison the company's products.

Detectives, led by Dep. Cmdr. Dudi Cohen and Superintendent Moti Avidan instructed Strauss to continue taking the calls. Late

Monday, the man called and Strauss kept him talking while police traced the call to a phone booth in Jaffa.

The caller, 30, of Bat Yam, was arrested, while he was still on the phone, and under questioning said he had remembered that Strauss had been blackmailed in 1987 and thought he was "easy prey."

The blackmailer, who has a police record, told police he was in dire financial straits as he is unemployed. He will appear in Tel Aviv Magistrates Court for a remand hearing this morning.

During the five phone calls, the

blackmailer said he suffered from AIDS, was desperate, and "would do anything." Strauss told *The Jerusalem Post* last night. "He said that by complying with his requests, my company would benefit and thus my competitors would be harmed."

The blackmailer told him that he "would not be the only one that is paying me off."

Strauss said he knew he had to "prolong the conversations" to give the police a chance to trace the caller.

"Although he threatened me his tone was not aggressive and he even apologized," said Strauss.

The blackmailer apparently found Strauss' home phone number after repeated calls to his secretary.

Strauss emphasized that his factory has stringent security and quality control methods, and that it is "practically impossible to poison products."

Over a five month period in 1987, Yehoyahin Shimoni, 45, had sent letters to Strauss threatening to put poison in dairy products if he was not given NIS 200,000

worth of diamonds.

Shimoni demanded that the diamonds be dropped from a plane to a specific pick-up point along the Coastal Plain. To show he meant business, he placed cockroaches in five cartons of Strauss yoghurt.

Strauss, following police instructions, arranged to meet Shimoni in a cafe on Tel Aviv's Dizengoff St. Shimoni even told him what clothing to wear to the meeting.

Strauss agreed to pay, but when Shimoni picked up the diamonds he was immediately surrounded by police.

Bill would lower NII payments for self-employed

EVELYN GORDON

PAYMENTS by the self-employed to the National Insurance Institute will be no higher than those by salaried workers, if a bill now being prepared by the Knesset finance committee's subcommittee on taxes is passed.

Although all workers pay NII taxes only on income below a certain ceiling, this ceiling is four times the average wage for the self-employed, while for salaried workers, it is only three times the average wage. The bill, sponsored by subcommittee chairman Avraham Poraz (Meretz), would also set the ceiling at three times the average wage.

The bill would also allow the self-employed to deposit a portion of their income in tax-free savings plans, which are currently available only to salaried workers, in the form of advanced study funds (*kranot hishulmu*). To pay for this change, which would be implemented gradually over three years, the Treasury, with the finance committee's approval, would be allowed to gradually reduce the right of salaried workers to deposit in these funds.

Attorney Tali Eldar from the Income Tax Commission told the committee the Treasury would support the bill as long as this latter provision is left in. Otherwise, the change would result in a significant loss of tax revenue, she said.

However, Yisrael Zahavi of the NII objected to the bill. Only 11,500 self-employed people pay taxes on income over three times the average wage, he said, but this money is used to subsidize NII payments to those self-employed with low incomes.



JNF Chairman Moshe Rivlin (center), Mitzpe Ramon council head Sami Shoshan, and a group of local youngsters pose with a llama, the hit of JNF Week celebrations in the Negev town. (Flash 90)

NEWS IN BRIEF

One killed, two hurt in Haifa Bay accident
A DRIVER was killed and two of his passengers were lightly injured yesterday in a collision between a car and a truck in the Haifa Bay region.

The accident occurred when a car traveling from Haifa to the Haifa Bay region hit the left side of a truck traveling in the opposite direction. The driver later died of his injuries in the hospital.

New national student paper appears
Intellect, the first national student paper, is appearing at universities around the country this week. Some 40,000 copies are being printed for free distribution.

The paper, completely independent of student unions or other groups, is the initiative and work of students, most of them from communication courses. The publisher is Galit Hazaz, 23, a student at the Tel Aviv College of Management.

Hebrew U. begins environment program
A new undergraduate program in environmental studies will be introduced next fall at the Hebrew University's Science Faculty.

The program will enable students to major in environmental studies along with another specialty. According to a university spokeswoman, the new program is being introduced because of the increased public interest in the field, as well as the substantial environment-related research already being conducted at the university.

Five Nobel Laureates at Technion fete
Five Nobel Laureates are to participate in a special symposium on "Scientific Landmarks" on June 6 as part of the opening of the celebration of the Technion's 70th anniversary.

The symposium is part of the Wunsch lecture series, initiated in 1963 by Dr. Joseph Wunsch, one of the founders and early presidents of the American Technion Society. The late Dr. Wunsch conferred an honorary doctorate on another Nobel Prize winner, Albert Einstein, for his steadfast support in helping to found the Technion.

Sentenced for giving forged invoices
An advertising agency director was given a four-month prison sentence and fined NIS 65,000 by Tel Aviv District Court yesterday for distributing forged invoices. The sentence was commuted to community service.

Dror Sternshus was convicted of distributing forged invoices to donors during the Likud party campaign for the Ramat Gan Municipality in 1988. He was fined NIS 15,000 and his company Sternshus Tsarfati was ordered to pay NIS 50,000.

Egyptian scientists due here
A delegation of four scientists from the Egyptian National Institute for Marine Science are to arrive here today as guests of Science Minister Shulamit Aloni. The visit was the result of an accord signed during her visit to Cairo in February. The Egyptians will take part in a sea exploration with Israeli scientists off the coast of Eilat.

PLO appoints Morgan Stanley to manage aid
The PLO has appointed Morgan Stanley Asset Management to manage foreign aid for the territories, a statement said yesterday. MSAM, a subsidiary of Morgan Stanley Group Incorporated, "was selected to help assure contributing nations and agencies that funds provided directly to the Palestinian National Authority... would be managed with total transparency in a highly skilled and professional manner, by the one of the world's preeminent financial services," the statement said.

US resident held on tax charges
A US resident suspected of evading hundreds of thousands of shekels in taxes was remanded for seven days by Tel Aviv Magistrates Court yesterday. The court heard that in 1968 Ze'ev Lahavi, 56, and his wife bought a plot of land in Herzliya Pituah with the intention of building a commercial complex. Lahavi is the managing director and shareholder of a number of real estate companies, and he and his wife visit regularly to take care of their businesses, tax investigator Yosef Spiro testified. After the complex had been built, Lahavi sold stores and offices in it. He received an improvement tax exemption certificate, but tax officials did not believe buyers' declarations about what they had paid and charged them property tax.

Law panel favors change in sex-crime testimony rules

EVELYN GORDON

A NEW amendment to allow victims of sex crimes to testify without the accused being present might be expanded to victims of other violent crimes, the Knesset law committee decided yesterday.

The amendment, now being prepared for its first reading, would allow the victim to testify in the absence of the accused if, in the opinion of an expert, the trauma of facing him is likely to cause her "genuine emotional damage," or if the court is convinced that she is not capable of testifying fully in front of him.

The accused would still have the right to watch the testimony on closed-circuit TV and to present questions via his attorney.

Yael Dayan (Labor), who sponsored the amendment together with Yossi Katz (Labor), argued against expanding the bill. Sex crimes create a special kind of trauma, she said, and should be the only ones that merit this breach of the accused's rights.

However, former justice minister Dan Meridor (Likud) ar-

gued that being subjected to ordinary violence can be equally traumatic. Furthermore, victims of ordinary violence are at least as likely as victims of sex crimes to withhold testimony for fear of further violence at the hands of the accused, he said.

The committee therefore decided to approve both the Dayan and Meridor versions for first reading, and decide between them before the second and third reading.

Meanwhile, Deputy State Attorney Rachel Sucar told the

committee it must try to ensure that the amendment is used only in extreme cases, since judges would probably be unwilling to impose a stiff sentence on the accused, or even to convict him at all, if he hadn't had a chance to confront his accuser in court.

"This is simply a breach of the accused's rights, period," she said. "It will lead to unnecessary acquittals."

However, Deputy Attorney General Yehudit Karp countered that the amendment might be necessary to allow the victim to testify fully.

Police raid Jaffa drug clan's citrus groves

RAINE MARCUS

IN their second raid in five months on the Abu Seiff clan's Jaffa orange groves, police arrested four family members early yesterday morning, after an undercover agent taped drug transactions.

Narcotics squad head Chief Superintendent Menahem Frank has been relentless in his campaign against the clan's groves, which were once a 24-hour drug supermarket attracting addicts from the central region. He described the heavily guarded stronghold as a "minor selling point."

"Our aim is not to seize quantities of drugs, but to get concrete evidence against dealers and thus to reduce the amount of drug pushing in the area," he

said. "We have sufficient evidence from taped recordings of transactions to convict dealers without finding large amounts of drugs."

In an operation dubbed "Black Night," detectives also arrested two members of Jaffa's Daka clan, and four other alleged dealers. Nearly NIS 20,000 in cash, which police believe to be profits from drug trading, was found in their possession. Traces of white powder and scales were found in one apartment.

Two particularly stubborn suspects, a mother and son with criminal records, who refused to open the front door to police were surprised when detectives

climbed through their upper story window using a fireman's ladder and ropes.

In January two undercover agents were used to raid the Abu Seiff groves, and police used tractors to dig up the area.

"Remaining family members, who are not in prison, believed they would not fall into the trap of buying drugs from an undercover agent again after the last blow," said Frank.

The agent, 47, a Jaffa drug addict with several charges pending against him, agreed to work for police in return for the closing of the cases and payment.

Coastal Plain police also raided the homes of 11 alleged dealers early yesterday. Here, too an undercover agent was involved.

Nursery boycotted after children swallow drugs

RAINE MARCUS

PARENTS boycotted a Jaffa nursery school yesterday after two four-year old boys swallowed dangerous drugs which they found in the schoolyard Monday.

One child found several pills, swallowed two of them and gave the rest to his friends. But two toddlers threw the pills away, and the third took one of them. The pills are being analyzed for contents.

The parents of the drugged

children attributed their offspring's drowsiness to the heat but when one child arrived home his mother discovered he was alternately hallucinating and falling asleep.

The child told her he had found some pills in the schoolyard. Taking him to Wolfson

Hospital for treatment, she immediately alerted the nursery school teacher, who traced the other child who had also taken a pill.

Mothers complained of the large number of drug addicts in the area and the municipality in turn promised to conduct searches in the yard and surrounding area.

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

Inauguration of the Porter Super-Center for Ecological and Environmental Studies

In the presence of
Mr. Yossi Sarid
Minister of Environment

Lectures
Professor Yossi Loya
Head of the Super-Center
Corals as Environmental Indicators

Professor Zev Levin
Incumbent of the José Goldemberg Chair in Atmospheric Physics
Effects of Climate Changes on Rainfall in the Eastern Mediterranean

on Thursday, May 26, 1994 at 7:00 p.m.
at the Plenary Hall, Marcelline Gordon University Club
Tel Aviv University Campus, Ramat Aviv

- The public is invited -

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Hundreds killed in Mecca stampede

Pilgrims crushed in 'devil-stoning ritual'

MECCA, Saudi Arabia (AP) - Hundreds of Muslim pilgrims re-enacting a 7th-century ritual of symbolically stoning the devil were crushed to death by an onrushing crowd. Doctors, diplomats and security officials yesterday gave estimates ranging from 250 killed to more than 1,000.

There was no official figure for the number of people who died in Monday's melee when pilgrims at the annual hajj surged through pedestrian paths in their zeal to participate in the pebble-throwing ritual.

Ambulances could not reach the scene quickly, which contributed to the high casualty toll, sources said.

During the ritual, pilgrims imitate Islam's founder, the Prophet Mohammed, who was said to have thrown rocks at three stone pillars in the cavern in Mina, about 5 kilometers outside Mecca, to symbolize stoning the devil.

By custom, pilgrims throw pebbles no bigger than a chick pea.

Saudis had tried to beef up crowd control in the area from Mecca to the cavern in Mina after a similar stampede in 1990 killed 1,426 people.

Muslims are expected to make a pilgrimage, or hajj, to Islam's holiest shrine, Mecca, at least once in their lives.

Eyewitnesses gave varying accounts of who died and how.

Talat Sharif, a Pakistani pilgrim who was at the site, said a group of Indonesians sitting on a pedestrian flyover linking Mina with the cavern area was killed when "a wave of people, mostly tall, well-built Africans, trampled them to death."

Some of the Indonesians, who apparently were waiting until sundown to throw their pebbles, tumbled to their deaths from the second-story walkway, he said.

Other pilgrims apparently seeking a more than symbolic toss tried to get as close to the pillars as possible.

"A wave of people, predominantly Asian, wanted to rush to the edge of the cavern because they think it's most sacred to actually hit the pillars with the pebbles," said Abbas Hamza Abbasi, deputy director of the Health Ministry, in a telephone interview from Jiddah.

Abbasi said people get trampled every year, but the numbers may have been higher this year because the crowd was larger. Saudi authorities have reported a record congregation of 2.5 million people in Mecca.

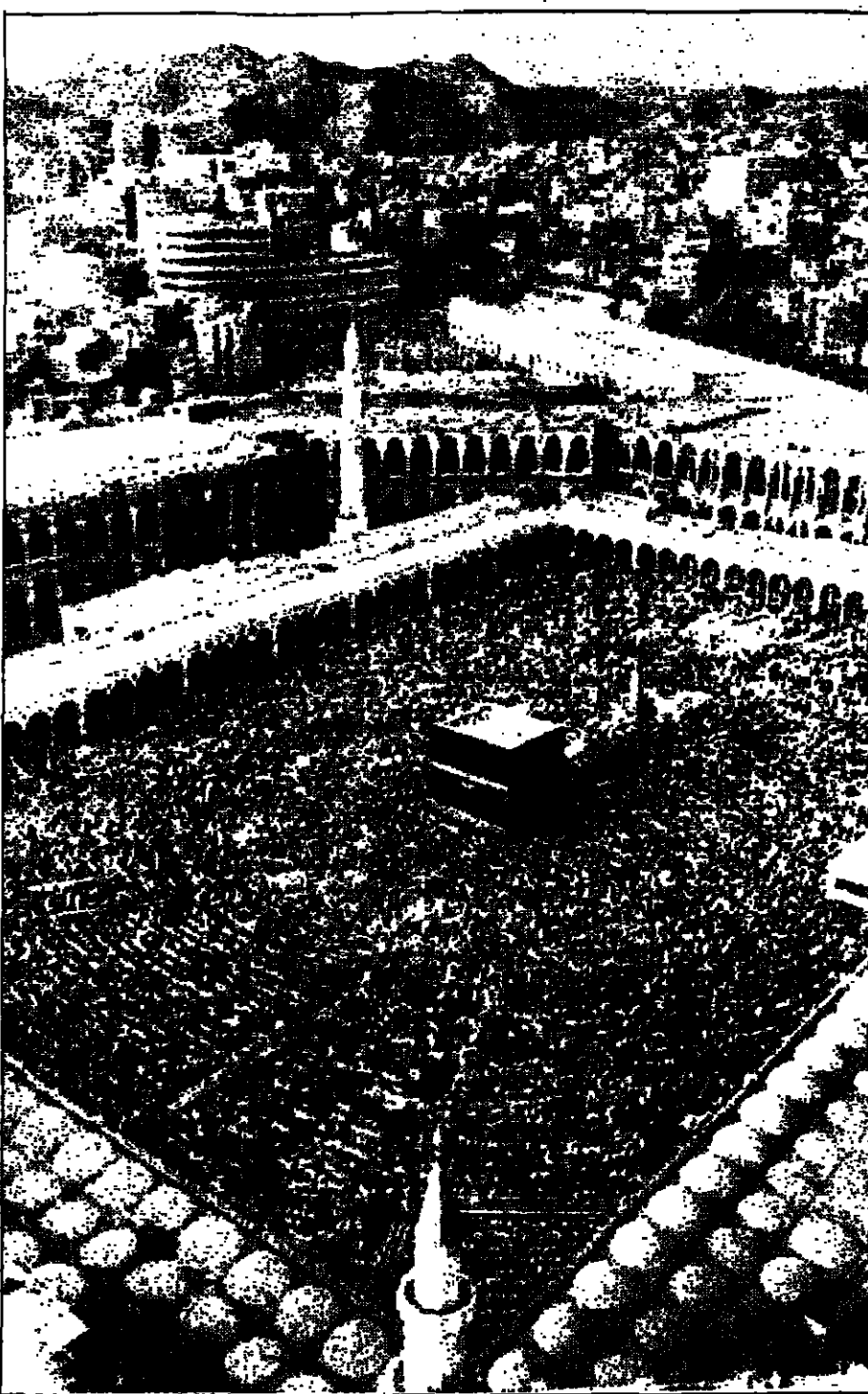
Security officials said 250 people died in the stampede while the state-run Saudi Press Agency said 829 people had died throughout the hajj for a variety of reasons, including "old age, heart attacks, [and] deaths that resulted because of the heavy throngs throwing pebbles on Monday." It gave no breakdown.

But a senior Asian diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he had learned through doctors and other embassies that the death toll was more than 1,000 from the stampede alone.

A doctor at the Mina General hospital, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that well over 1,000 people may have died during the pilgrimage and that the stampede was responsible for the bulk of the deaths.

Lebanon's state television said nine Lebanese were among those trampled to death, and Tehran's evening newspaper Kayhan said six Iranians died, but the state-run radio quoted officials as saying no Iranians were killed.

Adding to the confusion was Kayhan's report, which said the death toll from the stampede was 700.



File photo showing thousands of pilgrims gathered at the Great Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. As many as 1,000 people may have been crushed to death.

Japanese live longest; Israelis are second on men's list

GENEVA (AP) - The industrious Japanese live the longest. Roman Catholic Italians have the fewest babies.

And unhappy Hungarians have the highest suicide rate.

The World Health Organization's statistical yearbook published yesterday said Lithuanians were most at risk from heart disease.

France topped the league for cancer fatalities among men; Denmark for women.

The document, which runs to nearly 600 pages, contains thousands of statistics on causes of death around the world. However, many developing countries do not submit information and data for

others are old.

The report said Japanese men had an average life expectancy of 76.3 years, followed by Israel at 75.1. It said Swedish men could expect to live to 74.9 years and Australians to 74.8. The US was well down the list at 71.9.

The average Japanese woman lived to the age of 83, French women 82 and Swiss women 81.7 years.

Despite papal preachings against artificial birth control, Italy had the lowest fertility rate with an average of just 1.3 children per woman. Catholic Spain followed on 1.4 and Portugal and Greece on 1.5.

The highest fertility rates were reported in Rwanda with 8.5

births, Malawi with 7.6 and the Ivory Coast with 7.4.

Suicide continued to claim the highest number of victims in Hungary, it said. Some 59.3 Hungarian men and 19.8 women per 100,000 population killed themselves in 1992.

Finland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and Kazakhstan came next in the male suicide league. Bottom of the table were Armenia, Greece, Mexico and southern Brazil, it said.

For women, Singapore, Denmark, Belgium and Finland followed Hungary in suicide numbers. Mexico, Greece, Costa Rica, Chile and Armenia had the lowest rates.

Dutch officer who saved 1,000 from Nazis dies

Righteous Gentile John Henry Weidner

News agencies

LOS ANGELES - Former Dutch army Capt. John Henry Weidner, leader of the "Dutch-Paris" underground network that rescued hundreds of Jews and Allied airmen to freedom in neutral Switzerland from war-torn Holland, Belgium and France, died at age 81.

Weidner, who was named a "Righteous Gentile" by Yad Vashem, died from heart failure at his suburban Monterey Park home on Saturday, his wife, Naomi, said Sunday.

The organization Weidner helped form during World War II was credited with saving at least 1,000 people, including 800 Jews and more than 100 Allied airmen, by smuggling them into Spain and Switzerland.

The exploits of Weidner, the Dutch-born son of a Seventh-day Adventist minister who immigrated to the United States in 1958, were recounted in Herbert Ford's 1966 book *Flee the Captor*.

"He was concerned with people as individuals, not as masses," Ford said in a telephone interview from his Napa Valley home. "He always told me, had he been able to save just one person's life it would have been worth all the trouble he went through."

Weidner was honored last year at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, as one of the seven seven persons chosen to light candles at the opening. In Lancaster, Mass., Atlantic Union College, a Seventh-day Adventist school, founded The John Henry Weidner Center for the Cultivation of Altruistic Spirit.

Weidner, who moved to the

United States in the mid-1950s, was a leader of the Dutch-Paris Underground, which smuggled about 800 Jews and 200 Allied airmen to freedom in neutral Switzerland from war-torn Holland, Belgium and France. An avowed pacifist, he frequently topped the Gestapo's most wanted list, with a big reward on his head, and was captured and tortured several times.

Despite brutal interrogations by Nazi torturers such as Klaus Barbie, the infamous "Butcher of Lyon," Weidner refused to reveal the secrets of the Dutch-Paris Underground and confounded his captors with a series of daring escapes.

He jumped out of trains transporting him to concentration camps, swam the Rhine river under withering Nazi gunfire, and once jumped out of a third-story prison window just minutes before he was to be executed. He was one of the most decorated civilians in World War Two.

His sister, Gabrielle, was among 40 members of the network killed by the Nazis.

After the war he was awarded the US Medal of Freedom with Gold Palms, the French Croix de Guerre and Medaille de la Resistance, the Order of the British Empire, the Dutch Order of Orange-Nassau and Medal of Resistance, and Belgium's Order of King Leopold II. He was also designated an Officer of the French Legion of Honor.

In California, Weidner and his wife established a chain of health food stores.

Court: Touvier stays in jail

VERSAILLES, France (AP) - Noting his past years on the lam, a French court yesterday rejected Paul Touvier's request for release while judges consider an appeal of his crimes-against-humanity conviction.

Keeping Touvier, 79, in prison is "the only way to ensure" his life sentence can be served, said the court, noting that "a long search was necessary to carry out the ar-

rest mandate" the last time around.

The decision was made five years to the day since Touvier was arrested at a Roman Catholic priory in Nice after spending most of the previous 45 years on the run. "If Paul Touvier dies in prison, they will have allowed someone to die there who did not have to be," said Touvier lawyer Jacques Tre-molet de Villers.

Mystery flesh-eating bug claims more victims in Britain

LONDON (Reuters) - Hospitals in southern England have revealed three more cases of a killer bacteria that literally eats away the flesh of its victims, bringing the total number of victims to 10 with five deaths, officials said yesterday.

They said the new cases of the disease, which until now were restricted to the western English county of Gloucestershire, had turned up in southeast London and the counties of Surrey and Hertfordshire, respectively south and north of London.

Of the seven cases in Gloucestershire over the past four months, three have died. Of the three newly revealed cases, two have died since the beginning of the year.

Doctors are baffled by the mystery bacteria that destroys skin and tissue and can kill within hours. They said similar infections normally kill only one or two people a year.

But doctors have speculated that the organism could be a mutated form of the streptococcus bacterium, a usually harmless organism that lives in the throats of many people.

It can change form, causing virulent diseases that have killed people in epidemics in the past.

Symptoms are fever, severe pain, vomiting and diarrhoea. In later stages it has been producing a usually rare gangrene-like condition called necrotizing fasciitis that rapidly eats through fat and muscle and can kill a person in 24 hours.

Some of the Gloucestershire victims had surgery to remove infected tissue and one had a limb amputated.

A leading national team of microbiologists are continuing to examine tissue samples from the victims in a bid to understand the mystery bacteria.

Strike at BBC over plan for new work conditions

Proposal to relate pay to performance

LONDON (AP) - A 24-hour strike by thousands of BBC journalists and technical staff yesterday severely disrupted news programs on World Service radio and on BBC television and domestic radio.

BBC live sports coverage including cricket was also disrupted by the strike called by the National Union of Journalists and the Broadcasting, Entertainment and Cinematograph Technicians' Union.

The two unions have promised further strikes. News and other programs on British commercial TV and radio were unaffected.

The BBC strike began at midnight to protest plans to introduce new conditions of service and performance-related pay.

An early casualty was BBC domestic radio's flagship news and current affairs program "Today," normally broadcast for 2 1/2 hours each morning starting at 6:30 a.m.

"Today's" news bulletins were cut to five minutes each half-hour. The rest of the time was filled by recorded material, including an interview with Norman Lamont, who was fired as chancellor of the exchequer, or treasury chief, last year.

On BBC television, news bulletins were similarly cut to five minutes and recorded material, in-

cluding a documentary film about Ireland, was used to fill the rest of the time.

A caption informed viewers: "This program replaces our published schedule which we are sorry we are unable to bring you because of industrial action."

BBC World Service radio, heard by an estimated 120 million people around the world, was also hit.

As the strike began, the first 15 minutes of the World Service's "News Desk" starting at midnight and featuring international and British news went out as normal.

But the World Service news reader then stated: "As a result of industrial action by some members of the broadcasting unions, we are only able to bring you news bulletins and summaries. But it is not all bad because we are also able to bring you some rather pleasant music."

Musical follow-up until the news reader broke through again and gave a brief summary of the world news. Music then resumed until replaced by scheduled non-news World Service programs.

Leaders of the two unions say the planned changes will do away with guaranteed pay awards for all members of staff and increase the power of BBC managers to make more demands on employees.

Poll finds media more believable than church

STANLEY MEISLER

NEW YORK

NORTH Americans and West Europeans trust newspapers and television news so much that many readers and viewers pronounce the media more believable as an institution than even their churches.

Yet, despite this trust, substantial majorities would like to restrict press freedom to protect military secrets, stamp out terrorism and cut down stories dripping with sex and violence.

These contradictory attitudes surfaced as a major finding of the Times Mirror Center for the People & the Press in a recent survey of opinion about the media in eight countries: the US, Canada, Mexico, Britain, France, Germany, Spain and Italy.

The poll collated the views of a sample of more than 10,000 Europeans and North Americans.

Among the findings: More people get their news from television than from any other media. Substantial majorities watch TV news in all eight countries, but only in Germany, Britain and Canada did more than 50 percent of those polled say they had read a newspaper the day before (it was 49 percent in the United States). Huge majorities believe the media keep politicians honest, help democracy and generate a good

influence on society.

Americans know less about current events than any of the nationalities polled; asked a series of five questions, 37 percent of the Americans polled got all five wrong, while only 3 percent of the Germans, who did best on the test, failed all five.

Majorities in each country found TV news and newspapers believable, in most cases more so than churches and their country's leader. The only exception was Mexico, where the church and President Carlos Salinas de Gortari were about as believable as newspapers and TV news.

Without exception, heavy majorities said they did not find government officials, legislators and advertisers believable.

Yet there was much harping about the press. Most people complained that newspapers and TV news unnecessarily invade privacy. The exceptions were the Spaniards and Mexicans. The Italians believed that newspapers invaded privacy but TV news did not.

Most of those polled in all eight countries also did not believe newspapers dealt fairly with all sides in reporting social and political issues. All except the British had the same low opinion of TV news.

Los Angeles Times

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UN envoy in Kigali on peace mission

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Rebel and army guns fell silent in Rwanda's capital yesterday after a UN special envoy arrived in Kigali on a mission to extend a two-day ceasefire agreement. Both sides have repeatedly violated the truce.

While gunfire and exploding mortar shells echoed in the capital earlier in the day, the envoy, Iqbal Riza, flew into the airport and was taken into the city in an armored personnel carrier.

But most of the fighting stopped after Riza reached UN headquarters, where officials pleaded with both sides to observe the shaky ceasefire and extend it a day to allow Riza to complete talks with government officials.

Neither side had responded to requests to extend the truce beyond its 6 p.m. deadline yesterday. UN officials say both of the warring parties have used the ceasefire to prepare for new hostilities.

Thousands of people, fearful the rebels would resume their punishing offensive to take control of the city, took advantage of the lull and fled south from the capital.

In Geneva, the UN Human Rights Commission met in a rare emergency session yesterday to consider ways to end the savagery in central African country. Jose Ayala Lasso, the U.N.'s new high commissioner for human rights, said the ongoing massacre is one of the worst in history.

"Not since the end of the Second World War have we had to deplore so many deaths — 200,000, 300,000 or 500,000 — in such a short period," said Ayala Lasso, who visited Rwanda earlier this month in a bid to stop the killing.

Bosnian rivals gather in France for peace talks

SARAJEVO (Reuters) — Bosnia's rival leaders gathered yesterday for talks in France on ending their two-year civil war and the French government threatened to wash its hands of the conflict unless they accept the peace terms on offer.

Diplomats and officials in Geneva said the leaders of the warring Muslim, Serb and Croatian communities would meet international mediators today at the French resort of Talloires on the shores of the alpine Lake Annecy.

As the rivals prepared to meet with a new international "contact group" on Bosnia, their forces went on fighting for territory in the north of the former Yugoslav republic.

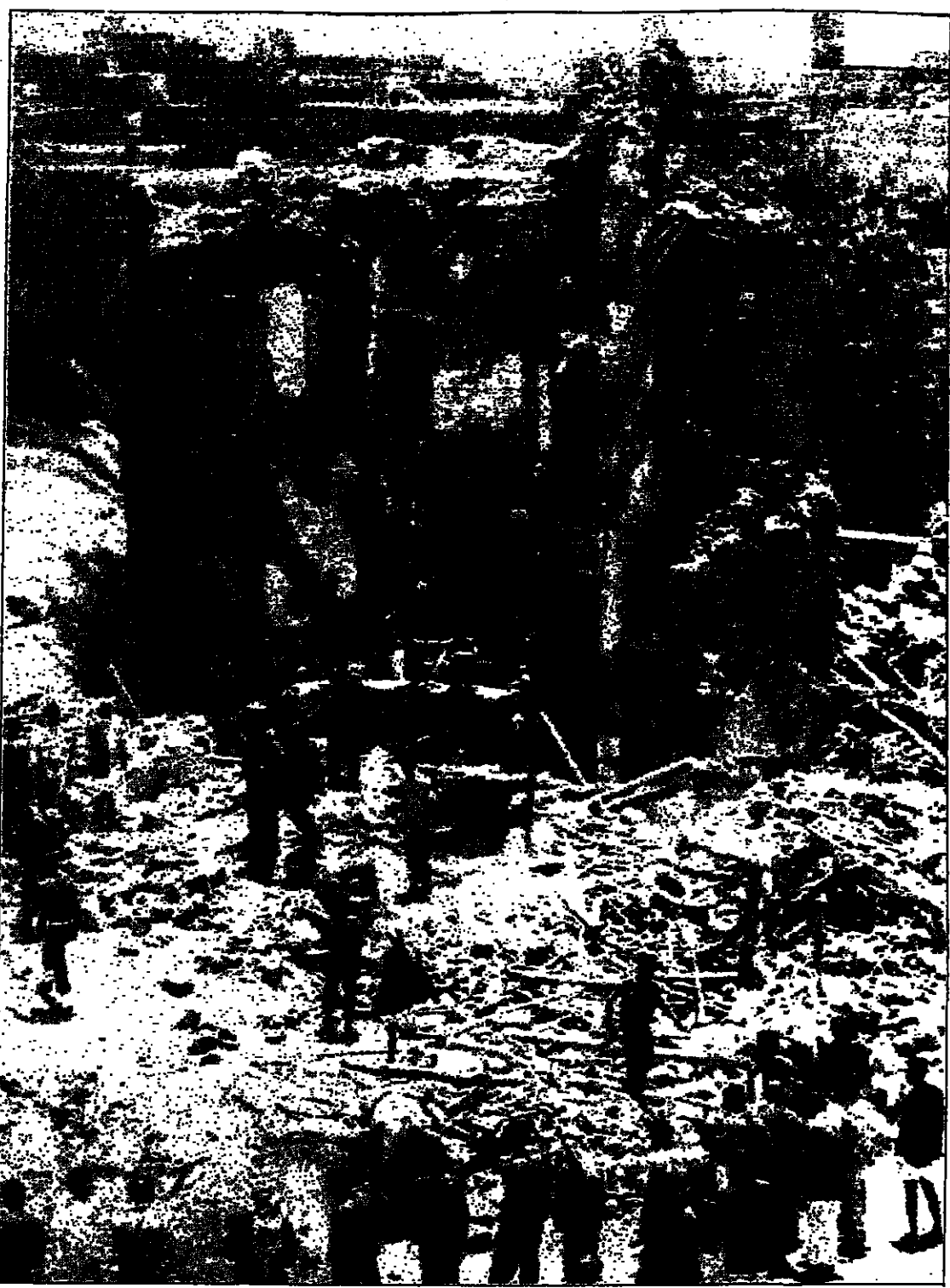
Prospects for a breakthrough at the latest round of talks dimmed after both Muslim and Serb leaders rejected a 51-49 percent territorial split being proposed by mediators.

Bosnia's Muslim president, Alija Izetbegovic, dismissed as unacceptable the plan to give the larger part to the new Muslim-Croat federation and the lesser one to the Serbs, who presently hold more than 70 percent of Bosnia.

"We want a just peace, but what is being offered is not a just peace," he told Sarajevo television on Monday.

Bosnian Serb delegate Momcilo Krajcinovic, speaker of their self-styled parliament, also appeared to reject the share-out plan yesterday, saying: "The percentage fixed in advance is a useless way of doing things. It must not be a precondition for continuation of talks."

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe vented his frustration over the situation by threatening to pull out his country's contingent of UN peacekeeping troops, the largest of any country, if the warring parties rejected the offered terms.



Security forces begin to clear the rubble of a Sana'a building hit by a Scud missile late on Monday. (AP)

12 killed, 90 wounded when missile hits Yemeni capital

SANA'A (Reuters) — At least 12 people were killed and nearly 90 wounded when a missile flattened houses in Sana'a, the second such attack on the Yemeni capital in three weeks of civil war, officials said yesterday.

Three families were unaccounted for 12 hours after the strike on Monday evening, and it was not known if they had escaped or were buried under the rubble, rescuers said.

"This is the work of traitor Ali Salem, the dog. It's inhuman," said Mahmoud Hammad, a resident of the al-Qar area, referring to southern leader Ali Salem

Baidh.

Director of Security Colonel Yahya Zaher said the explosion killed 12 people and wounded 89. Other security officials said at least 15 people died.

The missile which hit Sana'a landed a few houses from Jumhuriya Hospital. Debris wounded two doctors, eight nurses and 19 patients. Operating rooms were turned into a bloodstained shambles of broken glass and twisted metal.

Defense officials in Aden denied southern forces fired a missile. They said the north was trying to divert attention from a missile

attack on Aden on Sunday which killed eight people.

Since fighting broke out, more than 20 Scud missiles have been fired against northern targets. One hit a Sana'a residential area on May 11, killing 23 men, women and children.

Reporters in Aden said on Monday that the city, its military base and airport were under northern control.

Southern Yemen's main producing field Masila remained in southern hands and British employees at its Ash-Shihir export terminal said it was pumping at a normal rate of 150,000 bpd.

Three WTC defendants get 240 years each

NEW YORK (AP) — Three Moslem extremists convicted in the terrorist bombing of the World Trade Center were sentenced yesterday to 240 years in prison. The judge called one a coward for planting a bomb "to kill innocents."

The February 26, 1993, bombing killed six people and injured more than 1,000 in the 110-story twin towers, the world's second-tallest buildings.

Mohammed Salameh, Nidal Ayyad and Mahmoud Abouhalimi were sentenced first. A fourth defendant, Ahmad Ajaj, was to be sentenced later in the day.

US District Judge Kevin Duffy sentenced them after hearing a statement from the husband of a pregnant clerical worker killed in the explosion.

"I'll never get a chance to see him grow up," Ed Smith said of the boy his 34-year-old wife, Monica, was carrying. "We all lost this because of four men who wanted to blow up landmarks in New York."

Salameh, 26, a Palestinian immigrant, was convicted March 4 on

charges of conspiracy, explosives charges and assault.

In a half-hour speech in Arabic, which was translated by an interpreter, he proclaimed his innocence and accused the US government of covering up the real story of the bombing.

"I wonder how long I will remain in prison until the government reveals I was innocent?" said Salameh. "Two years? Seven? Ten? Twenty? God only knows."

The sentencing in a heavily guarded courthouse capped a trial that lasted more than five months and involved more than 200 witnesses and more than 1,000 exhibits.

The defendants spoke for themselves at the sentencing hearing because they had dismissed their trial lawyers and the appeal lawyers said they were not prepared. All four defendants have said they would appeal the convictions.

Duffy said the 240-year sentences were calculated according to the life remaining expectancy of the six people killed by the bomb — 180 years — then adding 30 years each on two further counts.

"My intention is you stay there [in prison] for the rest of your life," Duffy said after sentencing Salameh, adding "It is the mark of a sneak and a coward to plant the bomb to kill innocents and to steal away, and that's what you are — a coward."

Duffy, who ordered the sentences in a stern voice bristling with disgust, also fined the defendants \$250,000 each and told them any money generated by story rights or book deals would go to the victims' survivors.

"I can't imagine anyone wanting to give you anything," Duffy told Ayyad.

"You talk about the Koran," he said. "You have shamed it... You violated the laws not only of man, but God."

Salameh was accused of helping pay for and assemble the bomb before renting the van that carried it into the trade center's underground parking garage.

Ayyad, 26, a chemist, allegedly ordered chemicals for the bomb and sent messages to news organizations afterward that the motive was to protest US aid to Israel.

Mandela outlines his plan for the 'six freedoms'

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP)

— Calling for South Africans to "get down to work," President Nelson Mandela promised immediate relief to impoverished blacks yesterday while telling whites they would not be punished for apartheid's injustices.

In his first address to a joint sitting of the new parliament, South Africa's first black president vowed to create a "people-centered society" that would provide free health care for children and pregnant women within 100 days, and set aside 2.5 billion rand (\$714 million) this year for housing, electricity and clean water for impoverished blacks.

"My government's commitment to create a people-centered society... binds us to the pursuit of the goals of freedom from want, freedom from hunger, freedom from deprivation, freedom from ignorance, freedom from suppression, and freedom from fear," Mandela said in a speech interrupted several times by applause and greeted at the end with a standing ovation.

A lavish display of pomp and ceremony preceded the address, considered among the most important of Mandela's career because it



President Nelson Mandela takes the salute at the opening session of South Africa's all-race parliament yesterday. (AP)

set the tone for the new administration.

Mandela's motorcade ap-

proached Parliament along streets lined by thousands of whistling, cheering South Africans. A military band played the country's national anthems as Mandela and his daughter, Zenani, emerged from their car. Mandela then strolled into the chamber along a red carpet flanked by saluting soldiers.

Lawmakers applauded as he entered the chamber once reserved for whites only and launched into a speech aimed at reassuring blacks, whites, Xhosa, friends and foes.

Reactions were mixed. South African bond prices wilted in late trade yesterday. Dealers blamed this on investor concerns over lack of detail about where money for new development will come from.

Mandela further vowed to budget 2.5 billion rand (\$714 million) this year to kick off a five-year development plan aimed at creating millions of new jobs, homes, schools and other improvements.

The plan, estimated to cost more than 80 billion rand (\$23 billion) in total, would be bolstered by private and foreign money, Mandela said in a bid to allay fears the program would overtax South Africa's struggling economy.

Estonian and Russian leaders predict deal on troop pullback

ESTONIA (Reuters) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and Estonian President Lennart Meri said yesterday that they believed Russian troops could be withdrawn from the Baltic republic by the end of August.

After two hours of talks on the future of 2,500 former Soviet troops, which Estonia wants withdrawn, Kozyrev spoke of Russia's "desire and determination to actively withdraw as soon as possible."

Meri, who said there had been progress towards a solution, said: "Judging by the atmosphere that we had, I have not the slightest doubt that this deadline will be met."

The two men said they had a "strong common will" to see an agreement between the two states signed in the near future. They said special representatives would meet soon at deputy foreign minister level to try to forge a deal.

"I think there is a good chance to solve those issues in a civilized manner," Kozyrev told reporters. Asked if the previously agreed August 31 deadline for withdrawal could be met, Kozyrev said, "If we reach an agreement there is still time to meet this deadline. Why not?"

Russia has withdrawn from Lithuania forces left behind after the collapse of the Soviet Union and has agreed to pull its 10,500 troops out of Latvia by August 31, but has been unable to agree on a similar deal with the third Baltic state, Estonia.

The withdrawal has become linked with the position of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Russians and especially of 10,600 demobilized officers.

Moscow has accused Tallinn of passing citizenship and language

laws which discriminate against the Russians. Estonia denies any discrimination.

Earlier yesterday, Russia's Itar-Tass news agency quoted Kozyrev as saying that Moscow would not start moving its troops unless the interests of ex-Soviet military pensioners, predominantly Russian-speakers, were secured.

But Meri said Kozyrev had agreed the two issues were not linked and that the issue would be tackled according to Estonian law and government decisions.

32 for trial in Italy's corruption scandal

MILAN (Reuters) — Umberto Bossi, leader of the Northern League movement in Italy's new government, was ordered to stand trial with the dozens of the country's disgraced old guard yesterday on charges of illicit party financing.

Former prime ministers Bettino Craxi and Arnaldo Forlani were also committed for trial in the case, whose list of 32 defendants read like a who's who of the political order felled by Italy's two-year-old corruption scandal.

The trial, which judicial sources said had been set to start on July 5, arises from the largest strand of

the scandal, involving multi-million bribes paid to political parties by the Ferruzzi food to chemicals group.

The federalist League, which rocketed to prominence with its attacks on corruption, is one of three main partners in the conservative "Freedom Alliance" coalition sworn in this month under new Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

Bossi was put on a list of suspects in December of last year in connection with a \$125,000 payment his party received in 1992 from Ferruzzi.

Former League treasurer Ales-

sandro Patelli, who was also ordered to stand trial, has admitted taking the money, which he said was a contribution to campaign costs in the April 1992 general election.

He said the money was stolen from a party office days after he was given it and has denied that Bossi knew of the cash.

Magistrates allege Ferruzzi paid bribes totaling some 150 billion lire (\$94 million) to politicians as it first fought to get involved in, and later extract itself from, the disastrous Enimont chemicals joint venture with state energy group ENI.

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Foot in mouth

THE all-too-human "foot-in-mouth" disease afflicts public figures throughout the world. But Israeli politicians, particularly when in power, seem especially vulnerable to it.

When the Likud was in government, the opposition had to do little more than wait for ministers to commit the almost daily faux pas. Now the Labor party seems eager to prove it can do everything better. Its chances of winning this race seem excellent.

Labor has some decided advantages. Unlike the reticent Yitzhak Shamir, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin likes to shoot from the hip. Some of his blunt and often savage quips have entered the language. But his targets are seldom amused. And the wisdom of the nation's prime minister insulting whole segments of the population is not immediately apparent.

Rabin's latest excursion into tongue-lashing has embroiled him with the closest thing to a sacred cow this country possesses: State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat. Irritated by the criticism her just-published annual report leveled against government grants to the Palmah House - a pet Rabin project - Rabin said, "Who is she anyway that she thinks she can squawk about the Palmah."

This is not the kind of talk one expects from a premier, particularly after a cabinet decision not to criticize the comptroller. Ben-Porat is not only a model of the disinterested public official whose integrity is unimpeachable. She represents an institution which is the quintessence of democracy. Her office is a vital instrument of checks and balances in the government. To mock it is to deride the machinery of democracy itself.

Yesterday Ben-Porat expressed the hope that the saying "style is character" does not apply in Rabin's case. In this, she has proba-

bly voiced the hope of all Israelis. Even in a country hardly known for elegant public discourse, one expects a modicum of restraint and wisdom from the chief executive.

But while Rabin's outbursts can be seen as careless, spontaneous expressions of anger and irritation, the same cannot be said about Foreign Minister Shimon Peres's prepared speech Monday at a UN ceremony.

With UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Peres rang a Japanese Peace Bell on the grounds of the UN headquarters to mark the 40th anniversary of the presentation of the bell by the UN Association of Japan. The bell was mounted on a base of Jerusalem stone, an Israeli gift to the world organization.

In his speech, Peres drew a parallel between the Nazi extermination of Jews and the atomic bombing of Japan by the United States in World War II. He said the bell and the foundation on which it rested "in a way... are symbolizing two holocausts - the Jewish holocaust and the Japanese holocaust. Because nuclear bombs are like flying holocausts and historic holocausts are like a deep warning to our lives."

Israelis have always maintained that the Holocaust - the planned, systematic annihilation of Jews for being Jews - is a unique event in the annals of mankind. Comparing it to the atrocities of war, or even to genocidal outrages, is a betrayal of its victims and the whole Jewish people. Comparing the bombing of Hiroshima to Nazi deeds is an inexcusable insult to the greatest democracy on earth, a nation which saved humanity from slavery.

When such comparisons are made by non-Jews, they are deemed either morally bankrupt or vicious and hateful. That Israel's foreign minister is capable of making them is nothing short of mind-boggling.

The WTC verdict

THE bungling of the case against Meir Kahane's assassin in New York four years ago, and the acquittal of the youth indicted for killing yeshiva student Yankel Rosenbaum during an antisemitic Brooklyn riot a year later, cast serious doubts on the efficacy of American justice. The verdict yesterday against the bombers of the World Trade Center building served to restore some lost confidence.

That the jury convicted the four was a sign of sanity. That the court handed down prison terms which in effect preclude their release is an indication that at last the danger of Islamic terrorism has been understood.

Ed Smith, the husband of a pregnant clerk murdered in the bombing, told the court "I'll never get a chance to see my son grow up... because of four men who wanted to blow up landmarks in New York."

But the four men were not driven to blow up a landmark by a whim. They were ordered to do so by an organization which views the US as the great Satan, the leading enemy of

Islam. They committed an act of multiple murder, which only miraculously ended with no more than six deaths and a 1,000 wounded, believing they were fighting a holy war on behalf of their faith.

That the sentencing will not end this war is a given, nor is it the responsibility of the court to worry about the larger threat. But one should like to hope that the bombing in New York will make the US administration realize that fanaticism and terrorism threaten not only countries in the Middle East.

Financial support for organizations like the Hamas comes from some of America's best friends, particularly Saudi Arabia, and from sympathetic organizations in the US itself. Other terrorist groups, like the Hizbullah and some of the Palestinian organizations, receive assistance from Iran, a country with which the US is trying to reestablish normal relations. Imprisoning the WTC bombers for life is just. But only action against the countries which sponsor them and their like can win the war against terrorism.



The Dirani diversion

AN elite IDF unit, very professionally, abducts the man who sold Ron Arad to the Iranians and everyone gets the impression that the action had very little to do with our MIA.

Why? For one thing, because the prime minister and chief of staff went all out to create this impression; and because several commentators went along with it.

The premier and CoS claimed that Shi'ite leader Mustafa Dirani was taken not so he could be exchanged for Arad, but because he might provide some sort of lead.

But what kind of lead could he supply, six years after he let Ron Arad out of his hands? What possible information can this small-time retailer of terrorism have about Arad's current place of detention? It's hard to believe that the Iranians have taken the trouble to keep him up to date.

But let's assume Dirani does know something. Are we really expected to believe that Israel could increase indirect pressure on Iran on the basis of any information he might supply? Does anyone imagine that those who make the decisions over there are just waiting for Dirani's confession to respond: "Well done, lads! You've pushed us into a corner, and now that you've come up with convincing proof, we'll behave like human beings!"

On the other hand, if our intelligence is so terrific that it could pinpoint the floor of the house and the actual room Dirani slept in, why on earth would it need to rely

AMOS CARMEL

on such a dubious "lead," six years on? How come it's taken our bright intelligence boys this long to get their hands on the "crumb of information" (Rabin's phrase) still in Dirani's possession?

Then again, if Dirani is, as all official statements insist, just small fry, what are the media celebrating so loudly? Why the dra-

Someone high up decided to put on a very big show using elite IDF soldiers

matic news conferences, with the premier and CoS patting each other on the back?

The chief question: should an elite unit have been sent out to bring back such a meager "lead" after six years - when, according to the CoS's testimony, only a fine line separated the mission's success from its possible failure? Is this what the shelters in our northern settlements were prepared for? Is this why all our embassies abroad were put on alert?

REGRETTABLY, neither the two thunderous news conferences nor the mass of verbiage during

and after them provided any reply to these questions. Worse, the premier said lamely: "I tabled the action for cabinet approval in the knowledge that we had to take [those] risks because of our heavy responsibility for the fate of our POWs and MIAs."

He then went on to exploit the official statement on the IDF action to settle political accounts, complaining about the army being reduced to a police force in the territories over the past six and a half years. (An interesting point: who was defense minister during that period?)

Meanwhile, in the background, noises were made about the need to raise national morale and to send signals to the opposition.

When this kind of thing happens, when these kinds of questions are raised, one gets very apprehensive that the whole business has, indeed, been little more than a diversionary tactic. Many signs point to someone up there having decided to put on a very big show using elite IDF soldiers. The performance, which played on public sensitivity, was completely out of proportion to the stated objective. The fact that this sort of thing has happened before and the fear that it might happen again do nothing to lessen the gravity of the issue or the anxiety it generates.

The writer, a scientist, comments on public affairs.

Israel's 'Vietnam syndrome'

JUST over 20 years ago, the US was forced to withdraw from Vietnam. Its involvement there lasted more than 10 years and cost 57,000 American lives.

At the outset, America appeared invincible. Its forces, led by a West Point graduate, Gen. William Westmoreland, faced the inferior Vietnamese forces led by a historian/lawyer, "General" Giap.

Recently, CNN interviewed Westmoreland, now in his eighties. Asked whether he thought the Americans were defeated in Vietnam, Westmoreland replied that, in his opinion, the Americans suffered no military defeat there. There was a defeat, he conceded, but it was purely political.

The fact remains, however, that the world's mightiest military power was forced to abandon the country to a relatively weak military force. The political system that the US had vowed to defeat gained control of Vietnam and continues in power.

Few acknowledge that the Tet offensive, which broke America's will to resist, was actually a military defeat for Giap and his forces. After Tet, Americans decided they wanted out of Vietnam. They allowed Henry Kissinger to negotiate a "truce" which was a tiny fig leaf to cover the pell-mell retreat that shortly followed.

Israel would do well to study the lessons of the American experience in Vietnam.

It has an army that is among the strongest in the world. In a worst-case scenario, it faces a seemingly pathetic array of non-uniformed partisans led by Yasser Arafat, whose unilitary bearing is striking, even though he constantly appears in uniform. "General" Giap also never really had a military air, one might recall.

Israelis are asked to feel reassured by the IDF's overwhelming military superiority. If we ever have to fight, we are told, we will win.

Perhaps we would win - in the strictly military sense. The problem is that no one is promising us a political victory, which, in the end, is what matters.

ARNOLD KISCH

The Palestinians simply aren't offering Israel the chance to defeat them effectively with its military might, nor are they likely to do so. The Vietnamese fighters, clad only in black pajamas, worked the fields by day and couldn't be recognized as soldiers. Like them, the Palestinian fighters

Arafat knows the war will be won in the political arena, not on the battlefield

blend into the background, as laborers, children, mothers. Who can tell fighters from innocent civilians?

Like the Vietnamese, the Palestinians are gaining ground by wearing down the other side's resolve. Like the Vietnamese, they will engage in guerrilla, not classic warfare.

If Israel continues to rely on its military might, it will go the way of the Americans in Vietnam. The Palestinians will prevail.

THERE IS one major difference between Vietnam and the Israel-Palestinian conflict. The Americans were fighting a war in a distant land. When they had enough, they could pack up and go home to a land of their own. Israel lacks that luxury. If it loses its war politically, the price will be beyond reckoning.

Israel must shift gears - and rapidly. We must gear the public up for a long, slow struggle, in which every political nuance is a weapon, every negotiation a battlefield.

Our present leadership seems to be doing just the opposite - and the official spokespersons of the opposition aren't very different.

There is an impatience with Arafat's niggling focus on petty details and on his inability to focus

on the great tasks of government we see lying ahead for him. But Arafat is right and we are wrong. Each little detail that he worries about is a detail that strengthens him in achieving his eventual goal - to undo Israel.

To Arafat it is irrelevant to show that he can govern Gaza or Jericho to the world's satisfaction. In his view, he hasn't yet gotten anything worth governing - so why bother? What he has gotten is a foothold on his journey to victory, and that, to him, is the only thing worth his time and effort.

Nor is this just a matter of personal vanity, as we would like to see it. It forms part of a long-term, carefully thought-out strategy.

In the past eight months, Israel has lost much of the high ground in its battle to survive as a nation.

Someone must address the people of Israel - both inside and outside the Green Line. The government must listen to the nation's fears - which are real - and develop a coordinated strategy for a long, hard struggle, one in which fatigue and loss of hope are the real enemies.

It is time to stop strutting around in our uniforms and displaying our high-tech weapons. We must talk to the people, in their homes and in their communities. We must learn the specifics of the little outrages that daily weaken our resolve to resist. We must instill a sense of purpose, optimism and hope.

The nation must be made to see this struggle for what it is - a fight for survival.

In this struggle, the small daily tasks each person undertakes in order to survive are the critical factor. They must be recognized and given support by our leadership.

The leaders who can help us move in that direction will lead us to victory in the long run. The others, no matter how well meaning or how well studied in the military sciences, will only put us on the losing side of another Vietnam war.

The writer is a Jerusalem-based physician.

Strange ways

SUZANNE GARMENT

NEWSPAPERS and magazines have always run human-interest stories illustrating the quirky variety and universal truths of daily life. Nowadays, though, this feature is more likely to be called, as it is in Washington's *City Paper*, "News of the Weird."

Here we learn that a 35-year-old Colorado man was beaten up in a barroom fight, came home, blew his nose and had his eyeball fall out. (Doctors repaired the damage.) Or that a fellow in Idaho kept the mummified body of his dead mother on his living room sofa for seven years. (When asked her whereabouts, he would say, "Oh, she's in the house.")

It may be some consolation to know this growing love affair with the weird has seized the British, too. There, the journal *Fortean Times* gathers stories like that of the Southampton police who found a severed ear and refrigerated it; but when the ear's owner finally called to inquire, he was told the ear had already "gone off."

"It was next to an egg roll that had gone off as well," said a police spokesman, "so there was nothing we could do."

But America definitely has the lead. In fact, *Fortean Times* is

The media has become a bazaar of the bizarre

named after an American - Charles Forte, who, at the turn of the century, railed against the straitjacket that scientific rationalism imposed on human thought. Forte may have been the first to speculate that those mysterious lights in the sky were alien spacecraft.

In recent years, Forte has gained adherents by the carload. If fact, there is a comic book, *Urban Legends*, that tells three dozen currently circulating myths in gruesome graphics. The best known of these modern tales are here: how people brought little alligators home from Florida as souvenirs, then, flushed them down the toilet; how there are alligators in the sewers, and you'd better be careful when you go to the bathroom.

Or how the lady with the beehive hairdo, which she kept hairspraying and never washed, turned out to have a colony of black widow spiders eating away at her brain.

And, of course, the comic book gives us a few of the ever-popular exploding-the-baby-in-the-micro-wave sagas.

For now, even many sophisticated folks, who think they believe in science and rational explanations, have developed a dark, baroque, Fortean view of American politics and public life.

MAYBE THE change started with John F. Kennedy's assassination, which caused the American public to believe that the democratically expressed will of the people could be overmastered by sinister plotting done in secret. In the 30 years since, public opinion about the assassination has increasingly been ruled by conspiracy theories of the most convoluted, Florentine sort.

Then followed Vietnam, the anti-war movement, Watergate and the coming of a more elaborate ethics system to define, uncover and punish public corruption. People began to see much more than before about officials' venality and sneakiness.

The media started to give more attention to the private lives of public people, and news consumers learned about previously unsuspected strangeness among the famous. The press also increased coverage of bizarre events in society at large. Never, before today, could much of the country have an up-close, day-in-day-out look at a spectacle like the Menendez trial.

This increased visibility and disclosure have trained citizens and opinion makers to think even a seemingly loony story just might be true - and that anyone who pooh-poohs it may end up looking the fool. At the same time, the publicity has discouraged trust in official channels of communication. Rumor is the alternative.

Rumors are fun. They are almost invariably more exciting than the stuff that makes up daily reality. Yet they are moving closer to the center not only of our casual interest but our public life - and this is a warning. It means people are not just skeptical about what government tells them, but unbelieving. It means we think of our world as one where violence and corruption are not only possible but probable. And it means that the ever-present human desire for excitement is now becoming a dangerous need.

The writer, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is author of *Scandal: The culture of mistrust in American politics*. (Los Angeles Times)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EXCELLENT CARTOONS

Sir, - Oleg's cartoons are so much superior to those of your other cartoonists both in terms of design and a very good sense of humor that it is hard to understand why the readers of your Friday editions are deprived of the pleasure of ever seeing them.

The May 5 cartoon was especially excellent showing the ironic half-smile of Mubarak as well as the fitting expressions on the faces of the other four characters.

Netanya. DR. JACOB ROSIN

RATIONAL CHOICE

Sir, - In his letter of April 27, Moshe Poupko, using a process of elimination, seems to be trying to prove that anyone opposing Baruch Goldstein's action must be racist. How? Poupko posits that there are two schools of thought: (a) if Arabs can kill with impunity, so can we, and (b) that Jews should have a higher morality. Logically, then, (a) is "an egalitarian approach," whereas (b) is "quite racist." QED.

Or has his case indeed been proved? I'm afraid that Poupko used that old technique known as a "paper tiger" to prove his point. He forgets that there are four possible views, two of which he conveniently omits. The two he omits are: (c) Arabs should have a higher morality; and (d) morality would dictate that neither Jews nor Arabs have the right to kill indiscriminately. Now, obviously, both (b) and (c) are racist, expecting one group - regardless of which - to have a higher morality.

By the same token, though, one can oppose Goldstein's actions, and yet be egalitarian, as in choice (d). Shouldn't that, indeed, be the choice of any rational person?

SHMUEL HIMELSTEIN
Jerusalem.

OFFENSIVE ADS

Sir, - I wonder if you might again consider establishing some sort of code of practice with regard to advertisements in *The Jerusalem Post*. In spite of protests from readers against the printing of an ad expressing sympathy for Baruch Goldstein on behalf of friends and family, you persist in giving space to all kinds of bigots, fanatics and demagogues.

I recall in particular an ad given front-page space with simply the words "Bring down the government" on behalf of one David Lloyd Perkins. Granted my Diaspora dovishness, but doesn't this smack ever so slightly of incitement to rebellion and sedition? And on May 13, I found an ad run by an organization called "Victims of Arab Terror" in the style of a cut-out-and-post do-it-yourself referendum. One question asks:

"Do you believe that Arab murderers have rights, while Jewish defenders should be imprisoned without being charged?" I rather suspect that the Jewish defenders being referred to are none other than the detained Kach activists - those fine upstanding citizens. And with the greatest respect for all victims of terrorism from which none of us is safe, I find the name of such an organization dubious and liable to insult - "Arab" and "terror" coupled as if one and the same.

Providing a mouthpiece for the demagogic and the xenophobic damages the integrity of your publication and is an eyesore on the pages of a respected newspaper.

JACOB GORETZKI
Ein Harod Ilud.

RIGHT TO CRITICIZE

Sir, - As a regular reader of the *Post's* daily edition, I can see no logic in Dan Leon's complaint (Letters, May 8). Surely there can be nothing more balanced than a paper publishing contributions by Ari Sharon, Benny Begin, Yehiel Leiter and Shmuel Katz on the one hand and Abba Eban, Yael Dayan, Misha Louvish and Susan Hattis Rofe on the other.

I remember Dan Leon when he was the *Mapam* *shallah* in London and in those days, he seemed to spend more time bashing the then [Likud] government of Israel than recruiting new olim.

A democratic citizen of a democratic country must surely be aware that an effective opposition is the backbone of a strong democracy. The *Post* deserves praise, not censure, for its courage to criticize a government which seems to fear criticism lest it expose the hollow

ground on which its so-called peace policy is standing. Would Dan Leon prefer doing away with the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press from which he benefited so much in the past (thus ending democracy in Israel) to the present system in which both government and opposition are free to express their views?

And what does he mean by criticizing the ratio between pro- and anti-government letters published by the *Post*? It is simply absurd to blame the messenger for the unwelcome message that public support for the ruling coalition is slipping. The government and its supporters may not relish the facts that the *Post* brings to light, but ignoring them or trying to hide from them won't make them go away.

RUTH WILLERS
Wembley Park, Middx.

Thriving in a morbid business

DREW FETHERSTON
NEW YORK

DEATH and whimsy. For Roberta Halporn, a natural combination.

"You either laugh or you cry," she says. She is sitting in a straight chair in her snug store, a former storefront church in Brooklyn, whose arched windows filter the light of a rainy afternoon through frosted panes. The chair is low, which suits her; she is perhaps five feet tall, a size that helped when she was a dancer but has hindered her since. The usual prejudice of banks against making business loans to women is heightened, she says, when the woman is short.

Halporn is a speck of vivid life in a room — a very large room, too — full of death. Books about death and dying line the walls. Tombstone rubbings fill the closets and framed ones adorn the walls. Stacks of postcards offer death-themed recipes: Mexican Pan de Muertos, an old New York-Dutch Funeral Pie, an Armenian Soup to Save a Dead Soul.

Shelves in a standing coffin hold a mix of small objects and these lend toward humor: a small, stuffed Dracula doll, a skeletal hand that seems to beckon, a bumper sticker that says "I Brake for Old Graveyards," a pair of fuzzy slippers made to look like graves: turf-green bottoms, fresh-earth brown tops, gray tombstone tongues with "Over the Hill" printed like an epitaph.

Death as livelihood: Welcome to The Center for Thanatological Research, a fixture on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn since 1980. It is, in terms of sales volume, a small-press publishing house wed to a mail-order book business. The whimsical things — what Halporn calls "the popular stuff" — is a much smaller part of her operation. But everything focuses on thanatology: "The study of aging, dying, death, bereavement and recovery," in Halporn's succinct definition.

Halporn, it should be noted, is not death-obsessed. She is not morbid; not ghoulish; not gloomy. Death neither delights nor threatens her. It interests her as a scholar, as a businesswoman and, she believes, as a person who suffered an early loss. This last — the death of her father when she was 5 years old, followed by the death six

years later of the uncle with whom she had gone to live — is what sets her among a group of people — mostly academics, counselors and writers — who deal with death.

"I've thought about this," she says. "I've met all the pioneers in this field. We were all in our late teens when World War II stopped and the death camps were opened. We had dropped The Bomb and knew we could commit global suicide. The other thing was, 90 percent of them had lost someone while they were young."

Halporn has sent out several specialized catalogs of books, and these give an idea of how large and varied the field is: Her "Widowhood and Related Issues" list has almost a hundred titles. "Administering Death by Law" has more than 170, ranging the alphabet from *Abortion & Infanticide* to *Youth Suicide*. She keeps her list pruned to about 1,500 titles (of about 5,000 available from 500 publishers), and tells customers she will special-order any book that is in print.

Halporn began her professional life as a modern dancer. She had her own dance troupe and she choreographed three off-Broadway shows. But, when a robust male partner tossed her over his head, she broke a bone in her foot on landing. Unable to dance, "I ran into debt," she says. "I was heartbroken. I really felt I had my hand on the ladder of success as a choreographer."

When she was able to look for work, she found a job with Macmillan Inc., the publishing house, handling the foreign sales of books. That was in 1961. A few years and a few publishing jobs later she became promotion director for Law Arts, a Varick Street publisher who was then gearing up to do a series of books on entertainment industry law. The owner, Abraham Meilen, asked her first to sort out another project: a line of books on death and dying. She thought it was an odd and bad idea. Her imaginings soon vanished: to be replaced by enthusiasm for the subject.

By 1978, she was ready to go out on her own. "I was a single parent," she says. "I had my daughter's first year of college tuition in the bank. I could afford to do something new. I decided I was



Roberta Halporn is a speck of vivid life in a room full of death.

(Jim Cummings/Newsday)

going to set up a company of my own, and draw a circle around this small market."

In her first year, her gross sales were \$5,000 and all of her inventory fit nicely in the basement. By the third year, the inventory was scattered in spare rooms all over the neighborhood and the apartment was bursting. "It was either expand or close," Halporn says. She bought the Atlantic Avenue building with 15,000 inherited dollars as a down payment. She rented out the two upstairs apartments, moved her stock into the blessedly dry basement and moved herself into the loft-like open space behind the shop.

Her fourth-year gross was \$160,000. She took that number to the banks. "I had a track record, I employed four people, I was spending X amount of money, I was running a book club, paying salaries. All this with no outside capital. The banks told me: 'Go away, lady. You're crazy.' She stops halfway between anger and resignation. "Well, they didn't use those words, of course, but that's what they meant," she says. "Banks hate bookstores. To them a book is worth five cents. It's nothing. They can't see that there's a guaranteed interest in this strange subject."

Halporn's subject puts such

things as banks and money in perspective and there are lessons for anyone who visits. What, after all, are we to compare with the experience of William and Sarah Langley, whose names adorn an immense tombstone rubbing on Halporn's wall. The broad stone has six divisions, one for each Langley child laid to rest beneath it. "Then let my murmuring Heart cheer up with this," the stone says. "They with their Saviour art in endless bliss."

"It's from the Common Burying Ground in Newport," Halporn says quietly. "A wonderful place." (Newsday)

A lively market for the dead

ANDREW QUINN
BEIJING

STUBBING his cigarette into an ashtray, Zhang Kai explains why he thinks he may have one of the liveliest potential markets in China.

"About seven million Chinese people die every year. That is more than the population of some countries," Zhang says. "We have 700,000 deaths in Beijing alone. If I could just get 10 percent of that market..."

Zhang is founder of one of the odder by-products of China's new socialist market economy: Beijing Resting Souls Corporation, the country's first "all-service" private funeral provider.

And what a provider. Beijing Resting Souls will cast your cremated ashes to the waves from the stern of a military ship, or hurl them out of a plane over scenic mountain ranges.

Young women in natty, 1960s-style stewardess uniforms, complete with white gloves and per little caps, will gather up dirt and water from ancestral fields to mix with your remains so you can be joined with your homeland for eternity.

Dozens of doves are released at funeral ceremonies and bereaved families are given both photo albums and a videocassette to remember the event by.

"We want it all to be perfect," Zhang said. "We want people to be satisfied."

But all is not peace and tranquility at Beijing Resting Souls, run from a chilly exhibition hall next to the bumper-car ride in a park near the Forbidden City.

Money is a problem and business is slow, despite the company's efforts to promote ash-scattering as a "green" alternative to traditional funerals in which ash urns are buried, put in memorial halls or taken home.

Resting Souls has also been hit by sharp criticism from the city government, whose officials are fighting the company as a threat to the state's former monopoly on death.

"It's illegal," snapped an official in the funeral division of Beijing's municipal civil affairs office. "Well — it will be illegal once we get the laws in order to cover such things."

Zhang, who says he wants to "free people from the grave" by returning their ashes to nature, has fought to sell the idea in a city still dominated by the mummified corpse of Chairman Mao Tse-tung — who ordered China to begin cremating its dead in 1956.

"Culture can change, but it takes time," Zhang said. "We are trying to change people's thinking on this."

MAO'S INSTRUCTIONS on cremation, aimed at preventing arable land from being turned into cemeteries, have been effective.

Though Mao was preserved against his wishes in a mausoleum in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, the vast majority of bodies of modern urban Chinese are consigned to the flames.

Official statistics say that in 35 major cities the cremation rate is

now 95 percent, while in Beijing it is 98 percent.

The problem begins later. Although city dwellers have come to grips with the idea of cremation, they still want to save their relatives' ashes, either by putting them in a state-run memorial hall, a private reliquary or keeping them on the mantelpiece at home.

Babaoshan, Beijing's top cemetery for senior government and Communist Party leaders, has been expanded time and again. "It is stuffed to the rafters," Zhang said.

The official *Beijing Youth Daily*, in an expose-style report in 1992, said China was wasting 2.8 billion yuan (now \$321 million) in elaborate traditional funerals. Worse still is the lingering popularity of burial.

Fresh graves are visible along almost any country road in China, either in semi-official cemeteries or simply planted in fields according to local rules of geomancy.

The government has sought to keep the propaganda flowing on the costs and dangers of burial. But so far there has been no alternative attractive enough to spark the imagination.

Zhang thinks that with ash scattering, he has got one, and hopes to launch "the second great funeral revolution of China."

The idea came after his own father died in 1990. Unlike Mao, other deceased members of China's communist pantheon such as Premier Zhou Enlai and former President Liu Shaoqi had their ashes scattered to the winds. Zhang wanted to do the same for his father but found he couldn't.

After fighting through a number of different bureaucracies, Zhang finally set up Beijing Resting Souls early last year with seed capital of 300,000 yuan (\$34,000). His first funeral, with the doves, the death stewardesses and the military boat, occurred last August.

Zhang charges 600 yuan (\$69) for the sea burial and offers the sky-scattering service for 800 yuan (\$89), prices he says will cut traditional funeral costs by thousands of yuan. Although 10 people have signed up for the final plane ride, Zhang says he needs 20 to 30 more to make it cost effective.

Prices are higher for foreigners, including the Japanese and overseas Chinese who Zhang hopes may one day become an important customer base. A recent delegation from Japan left Zhang with six contracts for eventual funeral services.

He still worries about money, however, and Beijing Resting Souls appears to be surviving by the thinnest of margins.

Cabinets in his office are heavy with the urns of about 30 people due for sea burial later in the month — barring government interference — but after that a new advertising push may be necessary to keep the customers coming.

"We need to push this in the media over and over again, just like cola or family planning," Zhang said wistfully, lighting another cigarette. (Reuters)

Scientists seem to hold secret of long life

PAMELA WARRICK

IF it were a movie, it would probably be called *Nerds: The Ultimate Revenge*. A new study spanning nearly 70 years suggests that, all else being equal, scientists live longer than nonscientists.

The anachronistic image of socially impaired, slide-rule-toting chess masters has plagued legends of scientists, but their tendency to be less gregarious than others may give them the last laugh, says University of California, Riverside, researcher Howard Friedman.

"The findings do bode well for attracting the brightest scholars into science," says the Harvard-educated psychologist.

"We don't have scientific proof yet," he says, "but what this [study] may mean is that scientists have less stress. Perhaps they have found the right career niche for their interests and personalities."

Until now, sociability has been naturally associated with long and healthy lives.

"There has been a great deal of speculation and some evidence to predict that sociable people should live longer," Friedman says. "And at first, it looked like that would be the outcome here. Happily for scientists, we found just the opposite."

According to Friedman's study, non-scientists are 26 percent more likely to die at any given age than scientists. In a sample of 600 men born around 1912, Friedman's group found that only 67 percent of non-scientists were still alive by age 70, compared to 72 percent of the scientists.

With funding from the National Institute on Aging, Friedman tracked the lives — and deaths — of a group of California youngsters first identified as gifted in 1922. That is the year

legendary Stanford University psychologist Lewis Terman began his seminal behavior study of 1,528 children in Los Angeles and San Francisco public schools.

Terman originally set out to answer the question "Are scientists different?" But, according to Friedman, Terman was never interested in the differences in their longevity.

"He wanted to see if bright people turned out to be nerdy and sickly," Friedman says. "There was a stereotype at the turn of the century that bright kids were weird, and Terman wanted to see if they grew up to be well adjusted and successful."

Troubled by the hunt for Communist sympathizers among American intellectuals, Terman returned to the study in the 1950s in hopes of explaining the growing friction between non-scientists — specifically politicians and lawyers — and scientists.

Terman questioned 284 of the children who had grown up to be scientists and queried another 326 who did not. (All of the subjects in the second survey were white males; very few girls or ethnic minorities became scientists in those days.)

Terman discovered that scientists rated themselves and were rated by others as less sociable than most.

Using death certificates and interviews with survivors, Friedman's team was able to find out what happened to nearly all of Terman's subjects. Looking at causes of death, as well as health-related behaviors, the Riverside research team found that even early predictors of longevity seemed not to apply to scientists.

"We know that people who live longer are

not excessive drinkers or smokers. But even this seems not to be true with the scientists whose lives we studied," says Friedman, who also found no difference in the death rates of obese scientists vs. obese non-scientists.

There is a whole body of anecdotal history about the long and lonely lives of socially awkward scientists.

Thomas Edison, who died at 84, was no wallflower when it came to the world of inventions. But don't look for any sweet remembrances about life with this father.

Not only was Edison too busy in the laboratory to spend time with his children or grandchildren, he also paid scant attention to either of his wives or any of the people who wanted to be his friends.

Indeed, according to his biographers, Edison was so antisocial that he considered his deafness a blessing. He said it made it easier for him to concentrate.

Albert Einstein was more outgoing and, especially around World War II, quite politically active. He adored classical music, the violin, and his first cousin, whom he married after divorcing his first wife. He died at 76.

But even he preferred the company of formulas and theorems to that of mathematicians and physicists.

While the Einsteins of today are as likely to be orbiting in spaceships as they are to be bent over a microscope, the scientific personality remains somewhat aloof, say some students of behavior.

"The value of our findings about scientists' longevity," Friedman says, "will come from identifying what it is that makes them a breed apart and why they seem to thrive on it." (Los Angeles Times)



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Peace won't stop the march of Moslem antisemitism

ANYONE who believes that peace will bring a fundamental change in Arab perceptions of Israel is living in a world remote from reality.

Arab and Moslem hostility is rooted far deeper than criticism of Israeli policies in the region, for it is driven by a virulent strain of antisemitism grown in a powerful cocktail of Islamic and Arab anti-Judaism mixed with traditional Christian and neo-Nazi libels.

It is common for a foreigner to be told in the more moderate Arab states that "we are all People of the Book. Moslems have a high regard for Christianity and Judaism." This is fine for smoothing the paths of social intercourse – and those expressing such views are invariably genuine and hospitable Arabs.

But it is a myth. When this writer lived in the hospitable Gulf states, he frequently asked officials why his *International Herald Tribune* or *Time* magazine arrived in tatters because articles on Israel had been ripped out.

The reply would be along these lines:

"Look – we admit we are hostile to Zionism and we are officially in a state of war over Arab lands. Until there is a comprehensive peace, it is policy to censor articles which might offend our Moslem people. But we are not hostile to Jews."

So that was why even a foreign encyclopedia in a Bahrain bookshop would have the Israel entry and maps ripped out. But why was the section on Judaism also missing? Ah, that was "the individual decision of the bookseller – not official policy."

THIS is nonsense. It is true that before the emergence of Zionism complicated matters, Jews living in Arab countries had a special status as *dhimmi*s – protected minorities. Christians had a similar status. It is also true that Jews, while not free from restrictions and bursts of persecution, historically fared much better under Islam than they did under Christianity – the contrast between Jewish experience in Catholic Spain and Ottoman Turkey needs no elaboration.

It is, however, a central tenet of Moslem states that non-Moslem minorities – Jews, Maronites, Copts – must know their secondary place. The expression of that varies from Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, who noisily proclaims that there is no such thing as a non-Moslem Arab, to the relatively benign religious attitudes of secular Palestinians and Bahrainis (who allow crosses on evangelical and Catholic churches to offend Manama's Islamic skyline).

It is a mistake to view anti-Zionism as a mere product of official war propaganda which will fade away like anti-Argentine propaganda in Britain at the end of the Falklands War. It is a quite accurate projection of street-level anti-Judaism, constantly fed by antisemitic myths.

Antisemitism has been the main beast unleashed in the Arab war against the existence of Israel. But even as the exis-

BACKGROUND

THOMAS O'DWYER

tence of Israel is now coming closer to acceptance, the beast is roaring out of control.

THE London-based Institute of Jewish Affairs in its *Antisemitism World Report 1993* made the following comments on antisemitism in the Middle East:

"The use of Christian and Western antisemitic images is not arbitrary in the Moslem world. Negative images of Jews as evil, treacherous and conspiratorial have their own roots in Islamic thought and have been given new force by the revival of radical Islam...."

"The continued existence of the State of Israel, which is perceived as a humiliation for Moslems and Arabs [my italics], is explained away by the attribution of demonic powers to Jews and Israel. Repeated defeats in war are attributed to Jewish control of governments, the

media, the banks and so on.... Moslems have revived the blood libel and the denunciation of the Talmud (which, it is claimed, permits Jews to lie, cheat and steal from non-Jews) and mixed these with the image of a ruthless oppressive Israel, making a dehumanizing stereotype of the Jewish and Zionist enemy."

As an indicator of future trends under peace treaties, Egypt is interesting. A moderate country with only a handful of Jews, at peace with Israel, and with all its territorial claims fully satisfied, it provides textbook proof that antisemitism is a basic – and worsening – Moslem Arab attitude entirely separate from war propaganda and bilateral disputes.

In its fight against a virulent Islamic fundamentalism, Cairo actually has a vested interest in enhancing the peace with Israel and in suppressing public expressions of hatred against Jews, Copts and secular Moslems. Yet officialdom adopts a hands-off policy as savage antisemitism is promulgated by publications ranging from fundamentalist fliers to re-

spected establishment outlets like *Al-Ahram* and *Al-Jumhuriyah*.

FUNDAMENTALISM is leading rapidly to the Islamization of antisemitism in all Arab countries. The significance of this, says the Jewish Affairs Institute, is that antisemitism "gains an aura of divine authority and practical urgency which was absent from traditional Arab antisemitism."

This "practical urgency" of demonization marches side by side with the practical urgency Israel applies to peace and normalization. The zealots' work is being done in the mosques, not in the negotiating chambers. It is little reported, and it falls on reader ears than do peace proposals.

As the Jewish Affairs Institute says with remarkable understatement: "The zealots will leave their mark on Islam in a way that may prove hard to counteract."

The writer edits the foreign and Middle East pages.

US: Islam isn't the enemy

THE Clinton administration has mounted a strong public defense of Islam despite concerns about Iran's potential influence on Bosnian Moslems and the rise of radical fundamentalism in Algeria.

National Security Adviser Anthony Lake rebuffed analysts who suggest that in the post-Cold War world the fundamental divide is between Western democracies and civilizations based on Islam and other religious traditions.

"These theorists believe there is no common ground for understanding between the West and the rest, only the prospect of confrontation and conflict," Lake said at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The fault line runs instead "between oppression and responsive government, between isolation and openness and between moderation and extremism," he said.

Lake drew a parallel between the renewed emphasis on traditional values in the Islamic world and similar trends in the West. He said Islam by itself "is not the issue," but rather Islamic radicals who "use religion to cover real intentions: the naked pursuit of political power."

US officials previously have made similar attempts to make clear that Washington does not see Islam as the enemy.

But the strong underscoring of this point comes at a time when radical fundamentalism is on the

CAROL GIACOMO
WASHINGTON

rise in northern Africa and Iran has been wooing Bosnian Moslems with weaponry.

In addition, the US is continuing to push reluctant allies to maintain sanctions on secular Iraq and to deprive fundamentalist Iran of access to Western technology, a policy of dual containment of what Lake has identified as backsliding states bent on destabilizing the Middle East.

As the US, Russia and NATO allies press for a peace settlement in Bosnia, there is unease in Europe about the prospect of a Bosnian Moslem state in their midst, especially in the face of the Algerian civil war and an influx of North African immigrants fleeing recession-hit economies.

Lake acknowledged that Serbs fighting the US-allied Moslems "may seek to legitimize their conquest with claims that they are holding off a Moslem threat to the West."

"But the world should not accept such patently false claims and certainly we will not accept it," he said. "We support a democratic Bosnian state in which Moslems and Christians live together in peace."

Some view with concern Iran's efforts to arm Bosnian Moslems, who have been at a severe disadvantage in the two-year-old civil

war but have recently acquired more arms and are doing somewhat better on the battlefield.

On the other hand, a senior US official said there is little evidence Bosnian Moslems are interested in a serious alliance with Iran or its brand of fundamentalism.

Moreover, many in Congress and some in the administration argue that the international arms embargo on the Bosnian Moslems should be lifted. Iran is violating the embargo but achieving a goal the US has espoused in helping the Moslems.

Lake did not discuss Algeria in much detail, but his speech seemed to reach out to those in the hard-hit country who are pressing for change, if they do it nonviolently.

There are two views on Algeria in Washington.

One, seeing a country on the verge of breakdown, says there is little the US can do about it, and it should distance itself from the military-backed regime in power.

The other, which seems to prevail in the administration, says it would be a mistake for Washington to withdraw support from a regime trying to withstand the onslaught of radicals.

Washington has minimal involvement in Algeria, but agreed with France to back debt rescheduling for the regime, which experts say is moving toward democracy and economic reform. (Reuters)



Members of a Saudi family shave their heads to mark the end of their pilgrimage to Mecca. US officials deny that the post-Cold War world is divided between Western democracies and civilizations based on Islam and other religious traditions. (AP)

Dream of unity eludes Arabs, this time in Yemen Region fights AIDS with family values

YOUSSEF AZMEH
DUBAI

YEMEN's civil war has demonstrated once more that the dream of Arab unity, which has tantalized the Arab world for 50 years, has proved so far to be little more than a desert mirage.

Yemen's failure to preserve its four-year-old unity peacefully is the latest in a long history of abortive mergers and annexations among Arab states.

What Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh could not achieve around the negotiating table he is now trying to impose by force following the weekend declaration of secession by his southern rivals.

Arab unity is a highly emotive slogan in the Arab world. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein used it in his attempt to annex neighboring Kuwait in 1990. Yemenis voiced sympathy for Iraq then and Baghdad in turn has sided with Saleh in the present conflict.

Arab and Western experts said Arab leaders have often been pushed into untimely and ill-prepared unions by populations that continue to dream of Arab unity "from the ocean to the gulf" – that is from Morocco's Atlantic shores in the west to the Gulf Arab states in the east.

"We are one Arab nation," sung by the late Egyptian singer Mohammed Abdel-Wahhab in the

1960s and revived by northern Yemen's Sana'a Radio, can still bring a hardened Arab near to tears.

Arabs saw unity as a means of standing up to a militarily superior Israel.

But their recent history is littered with failed mergers, the most spectacular of which was the collapse of the United Arab Republic (UAR) of Egypt and Syria in 1961. The acrimony that resulted took many years to heal.

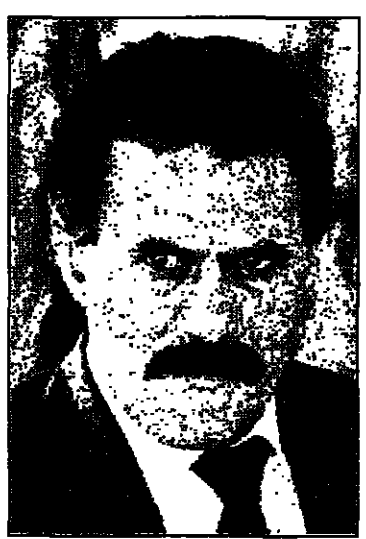
Other failures include mergers between Syria and Iraq, Jordan and Iraq, Egypt and Sudan, and Libya and a host of other Arab countries including Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia and Algeria.

The junior partner in any such marriages – and they were never between equals – could not easily accept absorption, as happened in Syria when it united with Egypt, and to some extent with South Yemen when it merged with Saleh's more populous North.

"The Syrians were lucky they did not have a common border with Egypt, or else they would have been crushed as Saleh is trying to do in Yemen," one Western diplomat said.

The experts said that the most likely cause of failure is the rush to establish complete mergers, with strong central governments among states that had developed their own institutions and separate identities.

They said this appeared to reflect the authoritarian pattern of



Yemeni President Saleh is said to be trying to "crush" the south. (AP)

rule virtually everywhere in the Arab world.

"They do not seem to be able to conceive of anything else. Virtually all governments are run by one man whose authority must always remain unquestioned," one Western diplomat said.

Yemeni leaders in Sana'a reject the parallel with the UAR or with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. They argue that Yemenis of north and south were one people that, separated by more than 400 years of foreign imperialism, came together again voluntarily.

The Yemenis argue that southern secessionists led by Ali Salem al-Beidh were simply rebels against legitimate authority who would not be allowed to shatter the Yemeni union.

But some of Saleh's officers have started to refer proudly to him as "Saddam the second" after the Iraqi president who appealed to Arab unity when he invaded Kuwait.

Yemenis swelled the streets of Sana'a at the time to declare support for Saddam in a reaction that seriously strained their relations with neighboring Gulf Arab states.

Diplomats in the Gulf said that the only experiment in Arab unity to weather the years so far is the United Arab Emirates of seven sheikhdoms that came together in 1971 when Britain ended its presence in the lower Gulf.

"The secret of their success is that they have maintained a loose federation.... Each state remains highly autonomous and runs its own internal affairs," one diplomat said.

Another attributed the lasting appeal of unity to the Arabs' romantic nature.

"The Arabs love romance.... The concept may have died outside the popular novel in the West, but it remains real for many Arabs," said one Western diplomat. "Unity is such a romantic dream that it continues to pull in the crowds." (Reuters)

WILLIAM MACLEAN
KUWAIT

THE MOSLEM Middle East, long reliant on conservative family values in the fight against AIDS, is showing a new willingness to consider other strategies.

But promotion of marital fidelity – "All sex outside marriage is unsafe sex" – is still the main theme.

The region remains a long way from education campaigns about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome as explicit as those in the West, according to regional and Western experts attending a recent conference in Kuwait.

"You will never find us visiting schools to give out condoms," said Hussein Jazairi, a former Saudi Arabian health minister who heads the World Health Organization's Middle East region.

But he adds, "We shouldn't create a taboo and then believe in it. Religious leaders in this part of the world can be much more open than doctors. In our tradition, you shouldn't be ashamed if you want to ask questions that can be related to religion."

"Even in Prophet Mohammed's time, ladies were asking leaders about menstruation and other women's matters."

The region's strategy against AIDS also includes encouragement of earlier marriage to reduce the "period of temptation" among young men, mandatory testing of foreign workers and the possible introduction of

put them at risk for HIV infection."

"It may be possible to say conservative tradition has stemmed the tide so far, but once you reach a certain critical mass and infection rates start to take off then the [Moslem] Middle East will not be protected by any type of culture or predominant value," she said in an interview.

Nevertheless, there was a new openness around, she said.

"I've seen a significant change in this meeting. At the 1990 meeting [in Kuwait], someone translated for me parts of the presentation where one of the speakers appeared to be railing against 'blonde-haired whores,'" she said.

"As a natural blonde and as a visitor here I resented the implications of that remark because, as I said in my speech today, the majority of HIV-infected women are not prostitutes."

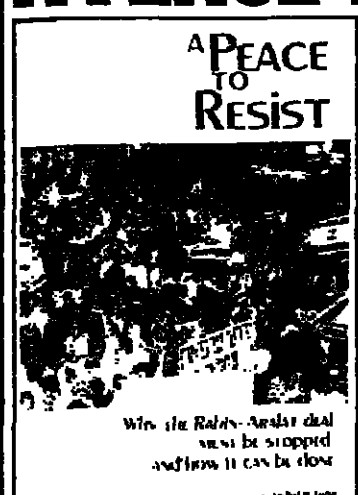
"Prostitutes constitute a very, very small proportion of the number of women worldwide who are HIV infected. I've not seen that attitude this time."

American doctor Lawrence Parish, an AIDS expert and professor of dermatology at Philadelphia's Thomas Jefferson University, drew gasps as he showed the conference slides of AIDS patients' severe skin lesions.

But he was more struck by the way his Arab audience did not react.

"It's the first time I've given a presentation in this region and not received the response from someone that 'AIDS is the will of God' or 'It's you Westerners who bring this disease,'" Parish said. (Reuters)

A PEACE TO RESIST



Yechiel M. Leiter, a leading figure in the YESHA Council, explains why the Rabin-Arafat deal must be stopped and how it can be done. Leiter offers a lucid analysis of the agreement, puts the agreement into a historical context, explains why a responsible campaign of non-violent civil disobedience by Israelis is needed, what Jews in the Diaspora can do, and presents a collection of concise answers to questions people often ask about Israel and YESHA. Required reading for pro and con alike. Softcover, 65 pp.

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RABIN OF ISRAEL



ROBERT SLATER

Robert Slater, of *Time Magazine*, traces the steps that turned Yitzhak Rabin into one of Israel's most formidable military heroes and political leaders. It provides not only a balanced assessment of Rabin's career, but reveals, through interviews with Rabin himself, family members, and with colleagues and rivals from the army and political arena, the character of this shy, somewhat mysterious man now embarking on a peace mission. Hardcover, 486 pp. Robson Books, Revised edition 1993.

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Antifundamentalist film opens in Egyptian terrorist stronghold

ASSIUT, Egypt – The film *Al-Irhabi* ("The Terrorist"), a controversial antifundamentalist story, went on general release this week in the southern stronghold of militants seeking to topple the Cairo government.

The film opened in a heavily guarded cinema in the provincial capital Assiut, 320 kilometers south of Cairo last Saturday, the first day of the Moslem feast of *Id al-Adha*.

Tickets for the four daily screenings quickly sold out despite the ominous presence of 62 policemen guarding cinemagoers against extremist attacks. Security sources say there had been no trouble so far.

The film, produced by an independent company with no government financing, stars veteran comedy actor Adel Imam as a militant who sees the error of his ways after living as a fugitive with an Egyptian family.

Some film critics have praised *Al-Irhabi* as a brave challenge to the error of its ways after living as a fugitive with an Egyptian family. Others criticize its simplistic characterizations or brainwashed agents financed from abroad.

Assiut has witnessed some of the bloodiest clashes between security forces and militants who want to establish a strict Islamic state.

More than 390 people have been killed in political violence in Egypt since 1992. (News agencies)

BUSINESS & FINANCE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 1994

Housing starts fall 17.4% in first quarter

JOSE ROSENFELD

HOUSING starts fell 17.4 percent in the first quarter to 8,160 from 9,880 in the last three months of 1993, as both public and private construction slowed down, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday.

The private sector began construction of 7,020 units, a 15.4% drop from the previous quarter, while the public sector initiated 1,140 fewer units than in the previous quarter, a decrease of 27.8%.

Housing completions continued dropping last quarter, paralleling the drop in starts in the preceding two years.

Completions fell 28.9% to 7,980

from 11,540.

Public sector completions dropped 51.1% to 2,330 units.

Private sector completions decreased a more moderate 12.7% to 5,650, nearly two and a half times greater than the number of completions in the public sector.

At the end of March, there were 60,200 housing units under construction, compared to 59,100 units at the end of 1993.

The number of units under construction fell by over a third since March 1992, during the peak of the government's construction program, when 91,700 units were under construction.

Africa Israel reports 76% rise in net profits

RACHEL NEIMAN

AFRICA Israel Investments yesterday announced a 76 percent rise in first quarter net profits, despite a 53% drop in profits at its insurance subsidiaries.

Net profits for the first quarter rose to NIS 18.1 million from NIS 10.3m.

Annualized return on equity rose to 10.9% from 7.5%.

The main factor driving profits forward was a 223% surge in profits from building transactions and apartment sales to NIS 22.6m. from NIS 7m.

CEO Shlomo Grofman said the impressive growth in revenues was an expression of an overall upswing for the company and larger margins for completed and sold apartments.

Grofman foresees a continued accelerated rate of demand for housing and has therefore ap-

pealed to the government for a budget which would stem escalating housing prices.

He has also appealed to the Israel Lands Administration to release areas in the central region for rental projects.

"Africa Israel is willing to enter the field in massive fashion and build buildings for rental," Grofman said.

By contrast, Leumi Insurance Holdings - through which Africa Israel controls Migdal, Hamagen, Maoz, Sela and Shimon - recorded a fall in profits to NIS 2.8m. from NIS 6.1m.

The company attributed the decrease to a loss of NIS 30.6m. on the TASE during the last quarter.

Subsidiary Africa Israel Hotels a subsidiary, reported NIS 1.5m. in first quarter profits, with an occupancy of 69%.

Manufacturers call for reduction in minimum wage, pension allocations

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

THE Manufacturers Association yesterday called for a reduction in both the minimum wage and pension allocations.

Speaking at a press conference in Tel Aviv, association official Doron Tamir urged Finance Minister Avraham Shohat not to accept any change in the pension funds that would increase labor costs.

The Fogel committee is expected to recommend pension reform soon. Reports have circulated that it will require an increase in contri-

butions from both employers and employees.

Tamir said the government must be involved in the reform and continue subsidizing the pension funds, as long as the manufacturers don't have to pay any more.

Commenting on the minimum wage, which is currently NIS 1,496 gross, Tamir admitted "it's hard for me to understand how people can actually make a living off such low wages," but emphasized it is already causing both increased unemployment and many plants to

go out of business.

"With such a high minimum wage, you can't compete with the NIS 300 salaries in Nabulus and even less in neighboring countries," Tamir said.

He blasted the government for "surrendering too fast to the public sector in signing the recent wage agreements," noting that the government "gave too much too soon, and we fear this will lead to a rise in real wages in the business and industrial sector."

Tamir lashed out at government corporation workers for their struggle against privatization, calling it "scandalous. A bunch of workers decides to act against a move which economically is indisputably necessary, only to preserve their excellent wage conditions, at the expense of the tax payers."

Tamir congratulated Haim Ramon on his victory in the Histadrut elections and said he should "reinstate at least some of the Histadrut's lost status, so we can negoti-

ate collective agreements with him."

He rejected demands to raise the minimum wage and Cost-of-Living allotment.

"I hope reason prevails among the new Histadrut leaders and makes it clear to them that such demands are neither economic nor plausible," Tamir said.

Speaking on Israeli industry in the peace era, Tamir predicted that industries would move to the autonomous areas to take advantage of the lower wages there.

Gov't blasted on Leumi tender

EVELYN GORDON

THE Knesset finance committee's capital markets subcommittee yesterday blasted the Bank of Israel and MI Holdings for the lack of a competing bid for Bank Leumi.

The existence of only one bidder means the final sale price will probably be considerably lower than if there had been competition, committee chairman Silvan Shalom (Likud) said.

Shalom also scored the decision to appoint new directors to Leumi on the eve of the sale, arguing that the new owners will almost certainly replace them. This, combined with the lower sale price of the bank, will cost the Treasury hundreds of millions of shekels, he said.

Shalom blamed the Bank of Israel and MI Holdings for lack of bidders, charging that people are reluctant to bid because the criteria for the sale are too stringent.

He cited the fact that the buyer must promise to maintain its stake in the bank for at least five years and certain limitations on the composition of the bidding groups.

MK Gideon Saguy added that the government should reduce the percentage needed to obtain a controlling interest, which is currently 20%. The central bank made this the minimum to ensure that the new owner would have to



Shalom: Criteria for the sale are too stringent.



Shohat: MKs want him to appear before committee.

invest a significant amount of his own capital.

Saguy also complained that there were no Israeli bidders for Leumi, and asked that Finance Minister Avraham Shohat be summoned to the finance committee to discuss ways of preventing a similar occurrence when Bank Hapoalim is sold.

However, MI Holdings director-general Gil Leiner said most major players in the local financial markets - such as Africa-Israel Investments, Migdal, Koor and Clal

- were unable to enter the bidding because they are partially owned by the banks.

Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles added that because Leumi and Hapoalim are so big, the most likely potential candidates are Jewish investors from abroad - but there are relatively few even of these.

The stringent criteria, Abeles added, are meant to prevent the new owners from embezzling or otherwise abusing their ownership of the bank.

'Telecommunications sector needs competition quicker'

JOSE ROSENFELD

THE government is being too slow in introducing competition to the telecommunications sector, which could be stimulated by taking advantage of the cable infrastructure to sell competing communication services to those of Bezek, Bank of Israel senior manager Avi Ben-Bassat said yesterday.

Ben-Bassat, noting that telecommunications is of ever greater importance to production in Western economies, said the sector's productivity here has grown at twice the rate of that of the private sector.

However, the delay in introducing competition will help maintain exaggerated telecommunication prices that will burden the private sector, said Ben-Bassat. Only competition can give a proper response to this problem, he said.

Ben-Bassat pointed to the expected 80 percent drop in cellular phone service charges due

to the entry of a second operator of such services as proof of competition's benefits.

Similarly, he added, Bezek's management announced it will cut prices on international calls by 40% based on the government's intention to license another supplier of long-distance services.

He noted that the competition underlines the importance of eliminating the cross-subsidy which international calls provide for other services.

Ben-Bassat said these are just first steps, and competition is slow in coming in the areas of ancillary services - including telephones, private switchboards and data transmission networks.

Bezek should be converted into a holding company that will control communications services companies functioning as sister companies to Bezek - and not as subsidiaries, Ben-Bassat said.

In addition, to create real competition these companies should be prevented from controlling or joining in partnership other telecommunications firms.

Ben-Bassat called on the government not to be deterred by Bezek's employees' opposition to competition.

According to him, their position derives from narrow interests, which cause the company to be run inefficiently.

Based on company statements, about 20% of its labor force is superfluous. Moreover, in the last 10 years, wages have increased 5% annually over the mean wage.

Net earnings up 16.4% at First Int'l

NEIL COHEN

FIRST International Bank yesterday reported a 16.4 percent increase in first quarter profits to NIS 31.7 million from NIS 27.3m. during the same period last year.

The bank attributed the rise to higher financing profits, despite eroded lending margins, higher commission income and lower provisions for doubtful debts.

As part of its plan to distribute part of its profits to customers, First International set aside NIS 2.7m. from first quarter profits. The bank said it will pay a total of NIS 11m. to more than 25,000 clients if the current level of profitability is maintained.

Net return on shareholders equity rose to an annualized 9.9% from 8.8%, for the whole of 1993 return on equity was 11.5%.

First quarter profits from financing activities went up 3.9% to NIS 118.1m. from NIS 113.7m., despite pressure on margins, which slipped to 2.1% from 2.3%. However, a 13% rise in lending to NIS 12.03 billion from NIS 10.2b. more than compensated for this.

Union Bank reported an 8.4% drop in first quarter net profits to NIS 7.07m. from NIS 7.71m. Annualized return on equity was 6.9%.

Although outstanding loans fell to NIS 4,088b. from NIS 4,115b. at the end of 1993, the bank recorded a 15% increase in profits from financing activities to NIS 52.49m. from NIS 45.56m.

Provisions for doubtful debts fell to NIS 3.1m. from NIS 4.5m. Operating and other income fell slightly to NIS 28.3m. from NIS 29.2m.

Bank Otzar HaHayal, a subsidiary of Bank Hapoalim, reported net profits marginally ahead at NIS 7.36m., compared with NIS 7.25m. in the same period last year.

Higher costs, resulting from a branch expansion program and completion of a computerization program, ate into improved lending profitability and higher commission income.

Bank Massad, also a Hapoalim subsidiary, reported a 200% increase in first quarter net profits to NIS 4.38m. from NIS 1.44m.

Profits from financing activities, after provision for doubtful debts, rose 36% to NIS 8.53m. from NIS 6.27m.

Passport announces NIS 6.8 million net loss in first quarter

COMPANY RESULTS

RACHEL NEIMAN

PASSPORT has announced a first quarter net loss of NIS 6.8 million, compared with a net loss of NIS 907,000 in the same period last year.

Per share losses rose to NIS 0.15 from NIS 0.04.

The company said the loss was a result of the TASE's poor performance over the past quarter.

First quarter net profits for Elta Electronics dropped 11.4 percent to NIS 10.9m. from NIS 12.3m. during the same period last year.

Revenues rose 6% to NIS 226m. from NIS 213m.

Earnings per share fell to NIS 0.73 from NIS 0.82.

A slight rise was noted in gross profit margin to 14.1% from 13.8%.

Clal Trading reported a 61% decline in net profits for the first quarter to NIS 2.6m. from

NIS 6.7m. in the same quarter last year.

Revenues decreased 24% to NIS 130m. from NIS 170.9m.

The company said revenues on international trade declined to NIS 20.6m. from NIS 48.5m.

Clal said the drop resulted from the timing of deals and increased competition in markets abroad.

Mediterranean Hotels has announced a NIS 13.3m. net profit for the first quarter, following a loss of NIS 116,000 during the same period last year.

First quarter revenues surged to NIS 70.8m. from NIS 53,000.

The rise was attributed to the inclusion of one-time revenues from the sale of units in the Mediterranean Hotel. Three-fourth of the units in the Netanyahu-based apartment hotel and convention center have already been sold.

Electric Corp. posts 12.5% rise in earnings

RACHEL NEIMAN

THE Israel Electric Corporation announced yesterday a 12.5 percent rise in first quarter net profits to NIS 118 million from NIS 105 million last year.

The mild winter was cited as a primary factor for both a decline of NIS 120m. in revenues and a NIS 15m. savings on coal.

Decreased sales and a mandatory 2.5% cut in fuel costs resulted in a NIS 40m. savings in oil.

In addition, the company said efficiency measures brought an estimated savings of NIS 55m.

Total revenues were NIS 1.17 billion, compared with NIS 1.29b. in the same quarter last year.

Meanwhile, rates for paying private suppliers who provide electricity to the Electric Corp. have been set, the Energy Ministry announced.

Energy Minister Moshe Shahal and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat signed the order setting the rates yesterday.

Shahal adapted the findings of the Broverman Commission about a year ago, which set the procedures by which private suppliers could sell electricity to the Electric Corp.

The commission ruled that such suppliers could provide 15% of the Electric Corp.'s electricity.

The ruling that private suppliers could provide such electricity led to offers for providing about 3,000 megawatts of electricity, mostly by diesel generators.

This necessitated the need for setting regulations for choosing private suppliers who would meet the Electric Corp.'s development needs, in keeping with national priorities regarding energy.

The emphasis was put on developing private suppliers who would use oil shale, the nation's chief energy resource.

Shahal appointed a separate commission to determine the method and extent to which the private suppliers would be integrated into the Energy Ministry's plans.

The approval of the rate structure will make it possible for the ministry to sign contracts with private producers already supplying electricity to the Electric Corp.

In a statement to the international electrical engineering convention, RAX 94, Shahal said plans were in the works for a Palestinian electrical authority.

An initial meeting was held yesterday between the energy ministry, the Electric Corp., the Civil Administration and Palestinian representatives.

Chinese Embassy hosting trade fair next week

LIAT COLLINS

LOCAL companies interested in seeing what China has to offer don't need to send representatives halfway around the world to take a look.

A trade fair from Anhui province is coming to the Chinese Embassy in Tel Aviv from Sunday until Friday.

There are more than 30 trade companies and enterprises operating with the province's foreign economic relations office, and many will be represented at the exhibition.

"The aim of the fair is to open up a new market and contact new friends in Israel, introduce an investment environment and seek opportunities for economic cooperation," commercial attaché Wang Qi Su said.

The main commodities to be shown at the fair will include tex-

tiles, garments, cereal oil, foodstuffs, teas and tea products, silk products, light motors and health goods.

Some 35 Chinese are expected to attend the fair to explain their products. The delegation will be headed by a senior official in the foreign economic relations department.

Anhui, an inland province in the east of the country, covers an area of about 140,000 square kilometers and has a population of 51 million. Its GNP last year was 70 billion yuan (about \$12 billion).

The province capital, Hefei, is known as the "flower of the world" for its natural beauty. The area has several tourist attractions among the mountain scenery, but of even greater economic importance is the more than 90 kinds of minerals and metals found there.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS

Petah (foreign currency deposit rates) (24.5.94)

Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	3.750	4.125	4.625
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.750	4.125	4.625
German mark (DM 200,000)	4.125	4.125	4.125
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	3.000	3.000	3.000
Yen (¥10 million yen)	0.500	0.525	0.750

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (24.5.94)

	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
Currency basket	2,2650	2,3120	—	—	3,293
U.S. dollar	3,0000	3,0433	2.85	3,0100	2.85
German mark	1,8233	1,8493	1.79	1,8727	1.8238
Pound sterling	4,5159	4,5796	4.43	4.64	4,5668
French franc	0,5234	0,5399	0.52	0.55	0,5369
Japanese yen (¥100)	2,8791	2,9197	2.82	2,8955	2.85
Dutch guilder	1,6241	1,6470	1.60	1.57	1,6233
Swiss franc	2,1292	2,1682	2.09	2.19	2,1435
Swedish krona	0,3801	0,3956	0.38	0.40	0,3821
Norwegian krona	0,4261	0,4395	0.41	0.43	0,4313
Denmark krone	0,4646	0,4712	0.46	0.48	0,4693
Finnish mark	0,5561	0,5639	0.55	0.57	0,5602
Canadian dollar	2,1793	2,2090	2.14	2.24	2,1938
Australian dollar	2,2022	2,2324	2.14	2,2156	2.18
S. African rand	0,8197	0,8303	0.84	0.86	0,8252
Belgian franc (FF)	0,8339	0,8393	0.87	0.91	0,8804
Austrian schilling (S)	2,5882	2,6249	2.55	2.67	2,6004
Italian lire (1000)	1,8741	1,9147	1.86	1.87	1,8987
Jordanian dinar	—	—	4.19	4.45	4,2870
Egyptian pound	—	—	0.86	0.91	0,9208
Irish punt	—	—	4.34	4.62	4,5291
Spanish peseta (100)	2,2058	2,2370	2.15	2.20	2,2234

* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.

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NEW STOCK MARKETS

New York market indexes

Index	Last	Change
DJ Industrials	3745.17	+1.76
DJ Transp.	1888.04	+0.27
DJ Util.	101.12	+0.73
NYSE Index	309.78	+0.08
NYSE Comp.	240.33	+0.05
NYSE Indus.	241.79	+0.02
NYSE Tech.	21.83	+0.11
NYSE Small	444.82	+0.02
NYSE Mid	338.18	+0.01

Other stock market indexes

Index	Last	Change
FTSE 100	2889.1	-18.2
Tel Aviv	1888.04	+0.27
Hong Kong Hang Seng	9480.11	-89.87

Israeli stocks in NY

Symbol	Last	Change
Amir	1.75	-0.05
Amir A	1.75	-0.05
Amir B	1.75	-0.05
Amir C	1.75	-0.05
Amir D	1.75	-0.05
Amir E	1.75	-0.05
Amir F	1.75	-0.05
Amir G	1.75	-0.05
Amir H	1.75	-0.05
Amir I	1.75	-0.05
Amir J	1.75	-0.05
Amir K	1.75	-0.05
Amir L	1.75	-0.05
Amir M	1.75	-0.05
Amir N	1.75	-0.05
Amir O	1.75	-0.05
Amir P	1.75	-0.05
Amir Q	1.75	-0.05
Amir R	1.75	-0.05
Amir S	1.75	-0.05
Amir T	1.75	-0.05
Amir U	1.75	-0.05
Amir V	1.75	-0.05
Amir W	1.75	-0.05
Amir X	1.75	-0.05
Amir Y	1.75	-0.05
Amir Z	1.75	-0.05

Dollar crossrates (US)

Country	Rate	Change
Japan	150.00	-0.01
Germany	1.80	-0.01
France	6.50	-0.01
Italy	1.35	-0.01
Spain	165.00	-0.01
UK	6.48	-0.01
Canada	70.00	-0.01
Australia	1.50	-0.01
South Africa	10.00	-0.01
India	45.00	-0.01

Labor rates

Country	Rate	Change
Japan	150.00	-0.01
Germany	1.80	-0.01
France	6.50	-0.01
Italy	1.35	-0.01
Spain	165.00	-0.01
UK	6.48	-0.01
Canada	70.00	-0.01
Australia	1.50	-0.01
South Africa	10.00	-0.01
India	45.00	-0.01

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NEW COMMODITIES AND METALS

US commodities

Commodity	Last	Change
Crude Oil (WTI)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (Brent)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (LME)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (ICE)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (NYMEX)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (ZIMBA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (LONDON)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (AMSTERDAM)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (BRUSSELS)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (PARIS)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (ZURICH)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (VIENNA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (MILAN)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (LISBON)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (MADRID)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (BARCELONA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (VALENCIA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (SEVILLE)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (CORDOBA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (MALAGA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (GRANADA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (MURCIA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (ALICANTE)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (VALENCIA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (SEVILLE)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (CORDOBA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (MALAGA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (GRANADA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (MURCIA)	17.12	-0.18
Crude Oil (ALICANTE)	17.12	-0.18

Spot market metals (US)

Cocoa (Jat) (LCE)	1068	-
Coffee (Jat) (LCE)	2348	-
Wheat (Jury)(LCE)	114.15	+
Wheat crude oil (Jat)(NPE)	1622	-

Spot market metals (US)		
	Last	Change
Gold, spot	385.95	
Silver, spot	5.81	-0.01

New York metal futures		
	Last	Change
Gold (Jun)	387.3	-0.5

US, Japan agree to resume trade talks

German M3 money supply growth accelerates in April

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and Japan reached an agreement yesterday that will allow both sides to resume market-opening talks that had been suspended for the past three months.

The agreement was announced at a White House briefing by US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor.

Kantor said the deal was struck following intensive talks held since last Thursday.

Kantor said President Clinton and Japanese Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata spoke for 14 minutes yesterday in a congratulatory phone call after the agreement was reached.

"It will boost confidence between the two countries to move in the right direction," Kantor said. "Prime Minister Hata said where there is a will there is a way."

"This is a firm commitment to a results-oriented agreement," Kantor told reporters.

Kantor said the United States confirmed in the new agreement that it was not seeking numerical targets or managed trade in the market-opening agreements, something the Japanese said they would never accept.

Yesterday's settlement will allow the United States and Japan to resume the "framework talks" that were launched by both countries with much fanfare last July.

The framework accord was hailed by the Clinton administration as the start of a new results-oriented era in US-Japanese trade relations that would make a sizeable dent in America's huge trade deficit with Japan. However, from the beginning, both sides argued

over exactly what had been agreed to.

The differences became so great that the talks collapsed altogether on February 11 at an acrimonious summit between Clinton and then-Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa.

The dispute revolved around a US demand that any new market-opening agreements contain numerical benchmarks for measuring progress in boosting US sales. The Japanese blasted this approach as managed trade.

Negotiators from both countries have been working since last Thursday to find new language acceptable to both sides that would bridge this gap by calming Japanese fears that US demands would lead to market quotas while still answering the American need to be able to measure progress.

Kantor said the revised framework agreement does not contain any timetable for reaching specific market-opening agreements. But he said, "Both countries are committed to moving as quickly as possible."

Officials earlier indicated that they would like to reach specific market-opening agreements in time for the annual economic summit among the world's seven richest industrial countries. This year's summit is scheduled July 8-10 in Naples, Italy.

The administration toned down its rhetoric in recent weeks in an effort to pacify financial markets, which earlier this month sent the dollar skidding to near-record lows against the Japanese yen. Investors feared that an all-out trade war might break out between the world's two largest economies.

FRANKFURT (Reuters) — The Bundesbank said yesterday that growth in German M3 money supply, already running well beyond the Bundesbank's target range, accelerated again in April.

April figures showed M3, the broadly-based measure of money and deposits, expanded at an annualized rate of 15.8% and stood 6.3% above its level in the final quarter of 1993. Both numbers showed the money supply well above the Bundesbank's four to six percent 1994 target.

Analysts said the April data confirmed that the central bank had almost no chance of reining in M3 growth sufficiently by the year end to allow the target to be met.

But they nonetheless expected the Bundesbank to refrain from a revision of its goal at its regular mid-year review in July, if only on grounds of credibility.

To move the target to improve the chances of hitting it means you are only really moving the goalposts," said Richard Reid, chief economist at S&P/IBS in Frankfurt.

"Shifting it by a small margin, say half a percent, is not worth it as they probably still won't hit it anyway," he added.

Deutsche Bank Research economist Ulrich Beckmann also

predicted no change in the target at the mid-year review.

"I think they will do nothing unless they can produce a very good reason for doing so," he said. He expected M3 to be growing at 7 or 8% by the end of the year.

Bundesbank president Hans Tietmeyer said last week that the regular review of the M3 target would take place in July. A Bundesbank spokeswoman said yesterday it had not yet been decided whether this would be on July 7 or 21.

But analysts also said that recent comments from Tietmeyer warning markets not to expect more cuts in leading rates soon had reduced the external importance of M3 as an indicator for Bundesbank policy.

After cuts of 1/2 point in the Lombard and discount rates two weeks ago to 6.00% and 4.50% respectively, most analysts had already predicted that there would be no new rate cuts at this week's regular council meeting.

Although yesterday's 15.8% growth figure came in higher than most had expected, economists found some solace in the details behind the headline figures.

Bank lending growth, for example slowed to 9.5% over the last six months from 10.2%.

Beckmann pointed to the small

slowdown in bank lending and the fact that some of the M3 growth continued to come from a shift back to Germany of funds which had been invested abroad.

"The Bundesbank may well not revise its target but point out that it is prepared to accept an overshooting to meet a primary goal of bringing marks back into Germany," he said.

Analysts expect M3 growth to decline later this year as the impact of recent Bundesbank rate cuts feeds through.

These cuts have been made with the stated aim of funneling funds into longer-term forms of investment — and so out of M3 — by making long-term yields comparatively more attractive.

The Bundesbank had already said that the effect of its two latest rate cuts, on April 15 and May 13, was unlikely to be seen in April figures.

Analysts took a still longer view. "Monetary capital formation improved somewhat in April, albeit from a very low March level," Reid at UBS said. "But it will take a long time to feed through."

Monetary capital formation — the process by which funds are moved out of M3 and into longer-term forms of investment — grew by 10.8 billion marks in April after 5.4b. in March.



Argentina's Ambassador to the EU Diego Guellar, general manager for fishery Jose Almeida Serra and Greek Ambassador Corcoran (left to right) representing the European Commission, sign an agreement on fishing rights yesterday in Brussels. (Reuters)

Fox grabs twelve TV stations from rivals

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Upstart Fox Broadcasting Co. on Monday unveiled a \$500 million joint venture with New World Communications under which it will grab 12 stations from its big three rivals and dramatically boost its share of the market.

Fox, owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Ltd., and New World, whose production company produced *The Wonder Years* and *Santa Barbara* television series, said the alliance will result in the largest shift in network affiliations in television history.

Industry analysts said CBS Inc., currently the most popular TV network, has the most to lose as a result of the move. Wall Street seemed to agree, pushing CBS' stock down \$14.50, or 4.79 percent, to close at \$288 on the New York Stock Exchange.

Fox and New World also will jointly develop syndicated programming that will run on both Fox and New World stations.

Some industry sources said the move could position Fox to launch a national TV news unit as part of its quest to become a dominant broadcast service. Even competitors considered the shift to be an important industry development.

"If this in fact comes out as it's been described, it will change the landscape. But it gives us absolutely no cause for reversing any of our positions," NBC President Robert Wright said in a speech to a meeting of NBC affiliates in Los Angeles.

"This represents a significant change, but we feel it's too soon to gauge all of its implications," said Robert Iger, president of the ABC Television Network Group of Capital Cities/ABC Inc. in a statement. CBS said it would continue

to seek affiliates to replace ones that it would lose.

The agreement calls for up to 12 stations owned or to be acquired by New World changing their network affiliations to Fox from ABC, CBS and NBC.

Eight CBS affiliates, including those in key markets such as Detroit, Atlanta and Cleveland, will join Fox over the next year or so as part of the deal. ABC will lose three affiliates and NBC will lose one.

Fox's coup gives a clear sign that the company's \$1.58 billion purchase of the NFL television rights is bearing fruit. Murdoch shocked the broadcasting industry last December by bidding as much as a reported \$100 million more a year than CBS for the four-year contract for the NFL National Conference Games, broadcast by CBS for decades.

While some criticized Fox for spending too much on a possibly money-losing football contract, that deal played an important role in winning over the new affiliates, analysts said.

"It's pretty clear it was important in bringing this deal off," said Paine Webber analyst Alan Gottesman.

All five of New World's currently owned and operated VHF stations are switching to Fox affiliations.

Fox said all the stations were better established in their markets than the ones they were replacing and would have stronger signals reaching wider audiences.

Murdoch launched the Fox network seven years ago with the \$2 billion purchase of seven television stations from Metromedia, controlled by John Kluge.

Coffee and cocoa prices soar to new highs

LONDON (Reuters) — Coffee and cocoa prices soared to their highest since the late 1980s yesterday, as speculators continued to throw money into commodity markets.

"The huge movers are the speculators and the funds," one analyst said.

There were also fresh warnings that when the markets do topple, it could be a rout.

By the lunchtime close in London, coffee for delivery in July was worth \$149 more at \$2,445 a ton, the highest in nearly 7 1/2 years.

Cocoa prices have been rising relentlessly in recent weeks, initially prompted by concerns over a small world crop caused by bad weather.

Low prices of recent years have also contributed to lower crops by making it uneconomical for many farmers to look after their trees. But traders say speculators, convinced that consumers will be

ready to pay much more for raw materials as the industrial economies pull out of recession, have effectively taken over the markets.

As prices steam up, so roasters and other users are forced to buy to protect their own positions.

Traders were reluctant to say how far prices might go next.

"Each time we have small setbacks, buyers come back in," one said.

The jump in coffee prices spilled over into cocoa which hit 6 1/2 year highs.

Cocoa has largely escaped the recent commodity price boom, having made its leap in December on reports of poor crops.

But yesterday morning many in the trade were caught out as cocoa soared on fund buying by £80 to £1,078 pounds a ton for delivery in July, the first time it has been that high since early 1988.

Poland ready to buy back 20% of debt

WARSAW (Reuters) — Poland is ready to buy back 20 percent of its \$13 billion commercial debt as part of a deal envisaging a 42.5% reduction of the debt, chief negotiator Krzysztof Krowacki said yesterday.

Krowacki said the level of buy-back proposed by Poland at the weekend — 41% for the principal and arrears and 38% for the trade facility — was likely to make this option attractive.

"We consider our prices to be good. They should attract about 20% of the debt and we are ready for it," he said.

He declined to give any figures for how much Poland could spend on the buy-back, but 20% of the debt priced at roughly 40% would mean a sum of about \$1b.

Krowacki said the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank would help Poland in the buy-back but declined to give details.

Poland announced on Saturday that it had started distributing a term-sheet detailing the restructuring deal made with the steering committee of creditor banks in March after more than four years of negotiations.

The package includes a 30-year, 43-percent discount bond paying 13/16 point over the London interbank offered rate (Libor) or a step-up 30-year par bond for the principal and related arrears, totaling about \$12b.

The revolving trade debt of about \$1.1b. will be turned into a similar par bond and a pass due interest bond.

Marks and Spencer rings up big rise in profits for last year

LONDON (Reuters) — Marks and Spencer Plc, Britain's most profitable retailer, said yesterday that profits rose nearly 16 percent last year, as it pushed sales upwards in a tough trading environment by keeping prices down.

Pre-tax profits surged to a record £851.5 million on a 10% increase in turnover to £6.54b.

Earnings for the 53 weeks to the end of March rose 16% to 20.9 pence a share. The dividend rose by 13.6% to 9.2 pence a share. Chairman Sir Richard Greenbury said the group achieved sales

increases ahead of the national average and boosted market share, especially in clothing.

British clothing and homeware sales rose by 9.8%, with negligible price inflation.

"Our sales performance gives us considerable confidence," he told a news conference.

The retailer's "Outstanding Value" price campaign, launched in September 1992, helped produce the higher sales volumes. Deputy chairman Clinton Silver told the news conference the price campaign would continue.

Greenbury said the group had not lost market share in food despite a fierce supermarket price war.

"Our customers have not deserted us for the green fields of Tesco and Sainsbury," he said.

But he was cautious on the overall outlook for the current year.

"The business has performed strongly throughout the UK recession but looking ahead we have yet to test the strength of the recovery in consumer confidence," he said.

Credit Lyonnais pulls plug on its troubled past

PARIS (Reuters) — One of the first changes that Jean Peyrelevade made when he became head of Credit Lyonnais last November was to ban the troubled state-owned bank's advertising slogan: "The power to say yes."

When the bank last week swooped down on the assets of its long-standing client, soccer boss turned politician Bernard Tapie, it was one more sign that a new era of saying "no" had begun.

Accused of ill-considered and profligate lending under the chairmanship of Peyrelevade's Socialist-appointed predecessor, Credit Lyonnais is now at war with its most dubious past.

"My priorities are to clarify the grey areas which linger on between the bank and some of its clients," Peyrelevade said in a recent interview. "I do not like ambiguous situations."

The list of grey areas is long and complicated.

The bank has put many of the losses left by an ill-fated venture into the film industry behind it. But costly lawsuits with the financier Giancarlo Parretti, who borrowed from the bank in 1990 to buy the MGM Hollywood studio, are still flying.

Credit Lyonnais is also bogged down by a Geneva judge's investigation into its role in the run-up to the collapse of the holding company Sasea, to which the bank was the main creditor.

Saddled with debts totaling a massive \$3.62 billion when it went under, Sasea was headed by another Italian businessman, Florio Fiorino, who is in investigative custody on suspicion of fraud.

Critics of Credit Lyonnais' lending policy and breakneck ex-

pansion during the late 1980s and early 1990s say that many of its customers, such as Parretti, Fiorino, and Tapie, enjoyed discreet backing by the Socialist administration of the time.

Just how far such carping, often made by members of the ruling conservative government, is justified may be revealed by an official inquiry now under way into the bank's difficulties.

That inquiry was launched after the bank unveiled a huge 1993 loss of \$1.22b. and a rescue package that could cost the French taxpayer as much as \$4.08b.

Peyrelevade has no taste for the political mud-slinging over the bank's past. Former head of the insurer Union des Assurances de Paris (UAP), he stands aloof from France's slick financial establishment. Even his dress sense — typically a sleeve-

less woolen sweater under a tweed jacket — sets him apart.

With the aim of privatizing the bank by 1996 in his sights, he has rolled up his sleeves and begun a restructuring of the bank's hierarchical management ethos and battered balance sheet.

Disapproving of what he sees as the bank's long tradition of chairman as absolute monarch, officials say he plans to expand its executive committee to 10 or so members from three in an effort to make decision-making more collegiate.

Contrary to complaints made by other high-street French banks, the state-backed rescue package is not being used by Peyrelevade as an excuse to sit idly by.

He has already completed the

sale of \$532.4m. of the assets built up during its expansion and plans at least \$3.02b. more between now and the end of next year.

As for new investments, they are out.

The bank may buy up minority shareholders in some of its subsidiaries and put some money into projects such as home banking, but the investment budget is more or less zero.

On costs, the aim is for zero growth this year and a drop in 1995. With salaries accounting for two thirds of its costs, the bank plans to make deep savings from job cuts.

Unions are squaring up for a battle over the 1,124 jobs cuts in France planned for the next 12 months. But Peyrelevade is characteristically cool.

WORLD BRIEFS

German Transport Minister Matthias Wissmann and his US counterpart Federico Pena yesterday finally signed an air agreement which opens up their countries' air markets to each other's carriers.

The short signing ceremony was the culmination of lengthy and often-heated negotiations which resulted in both sides signing a memorandum of intent in mid-March.

"The agreement is a milestone for what we want in future — open skies," Wissmann said. "It is a profound work which reflects both sides' interests."

Pena called the accord a "win-win deal" which would help not only national airlines but also consumers. *Reuters*

Shares in Swiss pharmaceuticals group Sandoz AG came under pressure yesterday as investors gave the thumbs down to its planned takeover of US baby food maker Gerber Products Co.

The \$3.7 billion bid for Gerber, which was launched on Monday after Swiss markets were closed, left some industry analysts scratching their heads, while others were positive.

"I just hope Sandoz can see more in this deal than I can," said analyst Peter McDougall of Barclays de Zoete Wedd.

Other analysts said Sandoz was paying a high, but not unreasonable price for Gerber, which has more than 70 percent of the US baby food market. *Reuters*

The German government, in a landmark decision, yesterday accused its own telecommunications monopoly of impeding fair competition by illegally subsidising its data transfer services.

An investigation ordered by the economics and postal ministries concluded that Deutsche Bundespost Telekom set prices for its "X.25" data transfer services below cost, an economics ministry spokesman told Reuters.

The resulting losses were compensated for by subsidies paid from Telekom's lucrative basic telephone services, which totaled \$1.16 billion since 1989.

Private competitors have complained that the subsidies meant they were unable to compete with Telekom in services like on-line information and tele-banking.

"The government has accepted the conclusions of the Cartel Office that competition was hindered by Telekom's indirect subsidies for its Datex-P services," the economics ministry said. *Reuters*

International Business Machines Corp. said yesterday that it named WPP Group's Ogilvy & Mather its single, worldwide advertising agency effective June 1.

Terms of the new advertising agreement were not disclosed.

The giant computer maker said Ogilvy will take over its full advertising responsibility, including media buying and planning, for the IBM brand and all IBM products and services.

Ogilvy replaces more than 40 agencies around the world currently working with IBM. In addition, the agency will be responsible for a substantial amount of IBM's direct marketing in many parts of the world.

Sweden yesterday presented its plan to sell up to 35 percent of drugmaker Pharmacia AB's shares on domestic and international share markets, taking one of the country's least-known but biggest companies into the limelight.

Institutional investors in Europe and the US, and the Swedish public, will be invited to buy a total of at most 82 million shares at a price of up to 150 Swedish crowns each in mid-June.

Listings will follow in London and New York to complement its current quotation on the Stockholm bourse. *Reuters*

French household appliances firm Moulinex said yesterday it had made a provisional loss of about \$97.6 million in the year to March 31, 1994, after taking exceptional charges of some \$88.7 million.

The firm, which was due to hold a shareholders' meeting later in the afternoon to vote on partnership offers from Ireland's Glen Dimplex and France's Euris, also said it planned to raise about \$177.5 million in a rights issue if a choice of partner was made. *Reuters*

A sixth straight year of record results at its music division — whose artists include Frank Sinatra and the Rolling Stones — helped British leisure giant Thorn EMI Plc yesterday to report a 19 percent rise in profits.

The group, one of the world's top three record producers, reported a rise in pre-tax profit for the year ended March 31 to \$493 million from \$413 million a year earlier.

The result was within leisure analysts' expectations without being spectacularly high, but Thorn expressed confidence in the future with an 8.75 percent hike in the final dividend, making a total payout to shareholders of 34 pence against 32 pence. *Reuters*

Japanese car and motorcycle maker Suzuki Motor Corp reported yesterday that parent profits and sales fell for the first time in 11 years because of the strong yen and poor vehicle exports in the year to March 1994.

"We posted the first decline in 11 years on our sales and profit in 1993/94," Suzuki president Osamu Suzuki told a news conference, predicting a further fall in profits this year.

Suzuki, owned 3.5 percent by General Motors Corp, reported parent current profit of \$176 million in 1993/94, down 10.2 percent from \$196 million the year before. *Reuters*

Smashnova upsets 5th-seed

Edberg, Sabatini also 1st-round French Open victims

PARIS (AP) — Anna Smashnova upset fifth seed Jane Novotna yesterday in the first round of the French Open. The 17-year-old Soviet immigrant from Minsk, beat Novotna from the Czech Republic 6-4, 6-2.

In other upsets, Stefan Edberg and Gabriela Sabatini joined Martina Navratilova as stunned first-round victims. But Sergi Bruguera and Jim Courier, finalists last year and winners of the past three men's titles, advanced in straight sets.

Edberg, seeded third, committed 18 double faults and fell to Henrik Holm, an unheralded fellow Swede who hung on to win a seersaw, four-hour marathon, 7-5, 7-6(7-1), 6-7(7-2), 6-7(10-8), 6-4.

Holm, 25, has never won a tournament and lost all three previous matches with Edberg. The French Open is the only Grand Slam title to elude Edberg, who reached the finals here in 1989 but lost in the first round in 1990.

Sabatini, a former US Open champion, won the first set against 108th-ranked Silvia Farina of Italy, then stumbled to a 2-6, 6-2, 6-4 defeat. Not since the 1985 US Open has the Argentine, seeded eighth here, lost in the first round of a Grand Slam.

Also upset was Petr Korda of the Czech Republic. Andrea Gaudenzi of Italy beat the Czech Republic's Korda, the 1992 runner-up, 6-2, 5-7, 6-7(7-4), 6-2, 6-2.

Ivan Lendl, a three-time French Open champion who failed to earn a seeding this year, lost in the first round for the second straight year, this time 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 to France's Arnaud Boetsch.

Afterward, Lendl said he was withdrawing from Wimbledon because of a back problem.

Courier, the 1991 and 1992 champion but now only the No. 7 seed, downed France's Jean-Philippe Fleurbaey, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4.

Bruguera, a surprise victor over Courier in last year's final, is seeded



STUNNED — Stefan Edberg contemplates imminent first-round defeat by fellow Swede Henrik Holm. (Reuters)

only sixth and has been struggling with shoulder problems. But the Spaniard's muscular baseline game looked devastating through much of his 6-1, 6-1, 7-6(7-3) win over 68th-ranked Martin Damm of the Czech Republic.

Sabatini, without a tournament title in more than two years, lost on the same No. 1 court where she blew a 6-1, 5-1 lead to Mary Joe Fernandez in last year's quarterfinals. This time, Sabatini had two break points to go up 4-1 in the

third set, but crumbled.

"This loss will hurt me, but I don't think it's going to be so bad," said Sabatini, who had reached at least the fourth round in nine previous French Opens.

In another upset, South African Amanda Coetzer rolled to a 6-2, 6-1 victory over No. 6 seed Kimiko Date of Japan.

Navratilova, the No. 4 seed, lost Monday, meaning three of the eight top-seeded women failed to make the second round.

Devils beat Rangers for 3-2 series lead

NEW YORK (AP) — Bernie Nicholls came back from suspension to score two goals Monday night and the New Jersey Devils moved within one game of the Stanley Cup finals with a 4-1 victory over the New York Rangers.

The Devils, with a 3-2 lead in the best-of-7 Eastern Conference final, can gain the championship round for the first time in their history with a victory in Game 6 tonight at the Meadowlands.

The Rangers, whose longest losing streak during the regular season was three games en route to the best record in the NHL, lost for the second straight time in the playoffs.

The Devils, who lost all six regular-season games to the Rangers, took control of this one with brilliant defense and an opportunistic offense.

Nicholls' first goal of the night came with the Devils short-handed and his last on a power play.

The Devils' center missed New Jersey's 3-1 victory on Saturday when he was suspended by the NHL for a premeditated cross-check of Rangers forward Alexei Kovalev in Game 3.

Mike Peluso and Tom Chorske scored the other goals for New Jersey.

NHL Playoff Glance
Finals (Best-of-7)
EASTERN CONFERENCE

Monday's result:
New Jersey 4, NY Rangers 1
New Jersey leads series 3-2

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Vancouver leads Toronto 3-1

Last night's scheduled game:
Toronto at Vancouver

Today:
NY Rangers at New Jersey

Amos weighs retirement after 'playing like a 4-year-old'

HEATHER CHAIT

AMOS Mansdorf surprised the tennis world last night by announcing he is considering retirement from the professional circuit.

After crashing out of the first round of the French Open, where he lost in straight sets to Jared Palmer 6-4, 6-0, 6-2, he left the court with tears in his eyes. At the post-game press conference, he said "This was the worst game of my career. I played like a four-year-old."

He added, "I no longer enjoy the game. I plan on taking a few weeks or months to decide whether I can return to play at 100% as before, or to quit."

Regarding his career as Israel's No. 1 Davis Cup player, Mansdorf was equally unsure whether he would represent the country again.

Mansdorf, who turns 29 in October, has been one of Israel's outstanding sportspeople, frequently crowned Sportsman of the Year.

In 1983, Mansdorf turned professional, winning his first title at Johannesburg in November 1986. In 1988, he won the Paris indoor tournament, defeating Brad Gilbert in the final and pocketing \$262,000. His best singles ranking was 18 in November 1987 but he is currently hovering around the 50 mark, this week slotting in at 49.

The Israeli tennis scene was staggered by the news and hastened to clarify the decision. Mansdorf told Israel Tennis Association president David Harnik that he cannot continue to play at this weak level and needs time to relax and to decide on his future.

National team captain Shlomo Glickstein was wary of seeing the statement as the last word. "Obviously, he's not at his best, but maybe all he needs is a time out and a holiday. He's had a difficult year and his motivation is low, but I don't see this as his retirement."

Fans pay tribute to Niko

DEREK FATTAL

OVER 2,000 Bnei Yehuda fans paid tribute to late soccer hero Nikolai Kodritzky yesterday evening in a memorial game for the Ukrainian striker who was tragically killed in a road accident earlier this year.

The match pitted the Hatikva Quarter side, complete with past and present stars, against CIS imports now in the Israeli league. The CIS won 6-3 with a five-goal blitz in the last 20 minutes.

The proceeds of the match will

go to Kodritzky's widow Victoria, who has expressed a wish to remain here with the couple's three-year-old daughter and obtain citizenship.

In other soccer action yesterday, Israel's national team beat Maccabi Herzliya 3-2 in a warmup match for the side's encounter next Tuesday against Argentina. Ronnie Rosenthal, Haim Revivo and Itzik Zohar hit the goals for the national team, with Herzliya's score thanks to Nissim Cohen.

Olajuwon leads Rockets over Jazz



HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Rockets did everything right Monday night, exploiting every weakness Utah had to coast to a 100-88 victory over the Jazz in the opener of their Western Conference final.

On offense, Hakeem Olajuwon scored almost at will against overmatched centers Felton Spencer and Tom Chambers. Kenny Smith was virtually unstoppable, hitting 6-of-9 from 3-point

basket. It all added up to a dominant performance by Houston, the team which outlasted Phoenix in seven games in the conference semifinals and which has the best regular-season record of any team remaining in the playoffs.

Game 2 of the best-of-7 series is tonight at the Summit.

For Utah, Jeff Hornacek had 19 points — all in the second half — Spencer had 15 and Malone had 16 rebounds.

The game turned the Rockets' way in the second quarter, which began with Houston ahead 20-16. Cassell hit his first four shots to spark an 11-2 run that made it 31-18 with 8:48 left, and Vernon Maxwell had two 3-pointers and Olajuwon three straight baskets in a 17-4 run that turned a 37-28 lead into a 54-32 advantage just before halftime.

If there was a weakness for Houston, it was its lackadaisical start to the second half when its 20-point lead was cut to nine in the first four minutes. Hornacek, coming off an 0-for-5 first half, hit his first five shots of the quarter, but the Jazz got no closer than nine, the last time at 61-52.

The Rockets upped their lead to 15 by the end of the quarter, and Olajuwon's three-point play at the outset of the final period got the lead up to 82-64.

From there, the lead got as high as 18 and never lower than 12.

NBA Playoff Glance
Finals (Best of 7)

EASTERN CONFERENCE
Last night's scheduled Game 1 — Indiana at New York

WESTERN CONFERENCE
Monday's result:
Houston 100, Utah 88
Houston leads series 1-0

Today:
Utah at Houston



THE LOW ROAD — Houston's Hakeem Olajuwon dribbles past Utah's Felton Spencer in first-quarter action. (AP)

Timberwolves to New Orleans

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Minnesota Timberwolves are moving to New Orleans five years after joining the NBA as an expansion team — the second pro franchise in 13 months to leave Minnesota.

Club owners Harvey Ratner and Marv Wolfenson said Monday a group led by Top Rank of Louisiana will pay \$152.5 million for the team and move it to New Orleans in time for the 1994-95 season.

"This is a big blow to Minnesota and the city of Minneapolis," said Governor Arne Carlson.

The matter now goes before the NBA's franchise relocation committee, but it is expected to approve the transaction.

The NHL North Stars moved to Dallas for this season after 26 years in the Twin Cities. It's also the second time that the NBA has left Minnesota; the Minneapolis Lakers moved to Los Angeles in 1960.

New Orleans gets a second crack at the NBA. The New Orleans Jazz began play in 1974 before moving to Utah in 1979.

"The New Orleans group was always just a backup," Wolfenson said at a news conference. "We were always waiting for someone to come forward here to

buy the team. People can believe what they want, but we were willing to take \$85m to keep the team here. You can't force someone to buy a team."

Said NBA commissioner David Stern: "Marv Wolfenson and Harvey Ratner have received substantial offers to purchase the team and keep it in Minnesota. Regrettably, they decided against accepting these offers."

Several groups, including one led by former Minnesota insurance executive Bill Sexton, expressed interest in buying the team. And the announcement came only hours after former NBA great Magic Johnson said he was trying to buy the team along with a group including singers Prince and Janet Jackson.

Earlier this month, the Minnesota Legislature thought it had taken a major step toward keeping the team here when it narrowly approved a \$42m public buyout of the arena. Carlson signed the legislation.

But Wolfenson and Ratner owed \$76m on the arena, which they opened in 1990 in time for the team's second season. They said they were willing to put in \$10m of the difference but weren't willing to eat the remaining \$24m.

Nat'l softball team finishes in fifth place

Post Sports Staff

THE national softball team returned home yesterday from the Zeist (Netherlands) softball tournament with a 3-3-1 mark, good for fifth place in the eight-team tournament.

The national teams of the Netherlands and Denmark tied for first with 6-2 records, followed by the Australian/New Zealanders and Czech Republic national squads who tied for third at 4-3.

Following Israel in the standings were select teams from Canada, England and the Dutch.

Catcher Tal Kiatoka was named the National team's MVP. He batted .364 with one home run, five RBIs and 10 runs scored. Behind the plate, he threw out seven would-be base stealers.

The Sports Pages are edited by Joe Hoffman

Carter's 9th-inning hit lifts Jays past Indians

Post Sports Staff

TORONTO (AP) — Joe Carter, the majors' RBI leader, singled home Devon White with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning Monday to give the Blue Jays a 6-5 victory over the Cleveland Indians.

With one out, White doubled off Jose Mesa (3-2). After Domingo Cedeño struck out and Paul Molitor was walked intentionally, Carter's line drive to right drove in White with the winning run.

Carter went 3-for-5 with a homer and two RBIs, raising his major league-leading total to 54. Darren Hall (1-1) pitched a perfect ninth for his first major-league win.

Carlos Baerga hit a three-run homer in the first inning for the Indians.

MONDAY'S AL RESULTS:
Toronto 6, Cleveland 5
Baltimore 5, Milwaukee 3
Oakland 7, Seattle 5
Only games scheduled

Ortolas 5, Brewers 3
Ben McDonald won his eighth game and sent host Milwaukee to a club record-tying 12th straight loss.

Milwaukee did succeed in stopping Rafael Palmeiro's 24-game hitting streak. Palmeiro went 0-for-4 with a walk, halting the majors' best hitting streak this season. He lined out to the mound in his final at-bat in the ninth.

NATIONAL LEAGUE
Marlins 3, Expos 2

Pat Rapp allowed one earned run and Jesus Tavarez made a memorable major-league debut to help Florida to a home win.

Tavarez, a 23-year-old right fielder recalled Sunday from Double-A Portland, threw out a runner at the plate, scored from first on a single and went 2-for-4 with an RBI.

MONDAY'S NL RESULTS:
Florida 3, Montreal 2
Philadelphia 11, St. Louis 3
Colorado 8, Cincinnati 3
San Diego 4, San Francisco 0
Chicago 6, Los Angeles 3
Only games scheduled

Greenberg, Grossman hot in Eilat

ORI LEWIS

VOLLEYBALL player Alon Greenberg of Hapoel Holon and hoopster Orly Grossman of Elitzur Holon led their respective fields after the first day of the two-day Isrotel Champion of Champions superstars event in Eilat.

Yesterday's events included shooting baskets against the clock, carrying various heavy objects, such as beer barrels, water containers and training weights; dribbling a soccer ball around a slalom course and then shooting the ball through a hole and a 400-meter run with two medicine balls.

While the basketball players and soccer players each had clear advantages in their specialized events, overall skills are nevertheless required to maintain a high average of good results over all the events.

The 40-degree temperatures didn't help the contestants, but plenty of camaraderie and good humor, particularly from Shimon Amsalem, the life of the party, kept all competitors and spectators in a joyful holiday mood.

Last year's men's winner, Olympic judoka, Oren Snadja, is in second place and Maccabi Tel Aviv soccer captain Nir Klinger is in third. The others taking part are Maccabi Tel Aviv hoopster Yisrael Elimelech and Betar Jerusalem's Ronen Harazi.

Among the women, volleyball player Keren Oigman lies in second place and hoopster Orly Kesten is in third.

The other women contestants are triathlete Limor Levin, weightlifter Orly Basan and marathon runner Lolly Leibowitz.

Today's remaining four events are rowing in rubber rings, running on a tarpaulin stretched across water, a 50-meter swim and running an obstacle course.

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WEATHER

Jerusalem 19-20
Tel Aviv 18-20
Haifa 18-20
Be'er Sheva 17-20
Dead Sea 20-29

Forecast: Partly cloudy to clear.

AROUND THE WORLD

Location	Low	High	Wind	Cloud	Remarks
Jerusalem	19	20	10	10	partly cloudy
Tel Aviv	18	20	10	10	partly cloudy
Haifa	18	20	10	10	partly cloudy
Be'er Sheva	17	20	10	10	partly cloudy
Dead Sea	20	29	10	10	partly cloudy

WHERE TO GO

Jerusalem in this feature are charged at NIS2.50 per line, including VAT. (Excludes every day of the month costs NIS44.00 per line, including VAT, per month.)

ISRAEL FESTIVAL

HELEN KAYE

AVANT-GARDE director Robert Wilson and Berlin's Hebbel Theater combine to present Wilson's adaptation of Gertrude Stein's *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*, with music by Peter Kuhn. Any Wilson production is light-suffused and visually dramatic. This is a must-see for those who care about theater. Tonight at the Sherover at 8:30 p.m. (English)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

THE music of the one and only Andrew Lloyd Webber is featured in a special concert presented by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra tonight (8:30) at the Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv. Anthony Inglis leads the orchestra in suites from *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *The Phantom of the Opera*, and Fiona O'Neill sings a few numbers, including "Memories" (from *Cats*), "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina" (from *Evita*), "Seeing is Believing" (from *Aspects of Love*), and "With One Look" (from *Sunset Boulevard*).

LECTURE

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

TALLIA Michaeli talks about iconography of Catecomb Wall Paintings and their Relation to Pagan Counterparts, tonight (7:30) at the Bible Lands Museum, Jerusalem. It is the first of two lectures. The next one (June 1) is on Stylistic Elements in Late Antique & Early Christian Catecomb Paintings. Both in Hebrew.

DANCE

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

THE Bat-Dor Dance Company performs at its own theater in Tel Aviv tonight (8:30) a mixed program featuring Nils Christie's classically oriented *Luminances*, Mauricio Wainrot's captivating *Strolling*, and Ed Wubbe's *Schlager*, an inspiring work that isn't easy to watch because of the harsh message it conveys.

TELEVISION

PENNY STARR

IF you're looking for an Israeli version of Oprah/Sally Jessy, try *Night Studio* on Channel 1 at 9:40.

CINEMA

HAIFA

WHAT'S ON IN HAIFA, dial 04-374263.

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CRITIC'S CHOICE



Emma Thompson plays Miss Kenton, the housekeeper of Darlington Hall in 'Remains of the Day.'

LECTURE

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

It's a studio discussion of social issues and current events hosted by Meni Pe'er. Donahue he's not, but he's ours.

DANCE

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

THE Bat-Dor Dance Company performs at its own theater in Tel Aviv tonight (8:30) a mixed program featuring Nils Christie's classically oriented *Luminances*, Mauricio Wainrot's captivating *Strolling*, and Ed Wubbe's *Schlager*, an inspiring work that isn't easy to watch because of the harsh message it conveys.

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TELEVISION

CHANNEL 1

6:30 News in Arabic 6:45 Cartoons
7:00 Good Morning Israel

EDUCATIONAL TV

6:00 Program Details 6:05 Keep Fit
6:15 Arithmetic 6:25 History of Eretz Yisrael 6:35 Judaism: Keshet v'anah
6:45 Natural Science: Let's Look Up
6:50 Pretty Butterfly 7:05 Captain Cook
7:10 A Look At Nature 7:20 Science and Technology 7:40 French-Avec plaisir 7:50 Nature 7:55 Mathematics 8:05 Mathematics for Bagrut
8:10 Science and Technology - Biological Revolution 8:35 Computers 8:40 Stories of King David 8:50 The Wonder Years 9:00 Zombit

CHANNEL 1

15:35 Winnie the Pooh - cartoon 16:00 News update 16:15 Concert - series of concerts for children with song, pantomime and dance 17:00 A New Evening 17:35 Legends of King Solomon 17:45 The Simpsons 18:15 News in English

ARABIC PROGRAMS

18:30 The Stars of Tomorrow 19:00 News in Arabic

HEBREW PROGRAMS

19:30 Real Time - magazine 20:00 Mabat 21:00 Straight and to the Point 21:30 Night Studio - social issues and current events 22:30 Film: Meni Pe'er 22:30 Film: One From The Heart (1982) - Romantic comedy about a married couple who have lost the romance in their lives. Each partner separately meets a person of the opposite sex and each one realizes his/her dream. Starring Frederic Forrest, Teri Garr, Raul Julia, Nastassia Kinski. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. (103 mins) 23:00 Late-night news 23:05 Continuation of film

THE STAR CHANNEL 2

14:05 Star Trek - The Next Generation 15:00 Animated series 15:30 Tin Tin - animated series 16:00 Folktales - seen from the present-day point of view 17:00 News 17:05 Doug - animated series 17:30 The Prince of Bel-Air 18:00 Claps With Love - with Avi Gild 19:00 NBA Action - weekly magazine 19:30 Kolobud 20:00 News 20:30 Hagshafah Hahiv - comedy 21:00 Live - Dan Shilon hosts 22:30 Film: Empire of the Sun (1987) - A British boy living in Shanghai is separated from his parents when the Japanese invade China in WWII. He learns to survive in the detention camp for expatriates. Starring John Malkovich, Miranda Richardson, Nigel Havers. Directed by Steven Spielberg. (146 mins) 23:00 News 23:35 Continuation of film

JORDAN TV (unofficial)

17:30 French programs 19:00 News in French 19:15 Classical music 19:30 News in Hebrew 19:45 Documentary 20:00 News in Arabic 20:30 Too Close For Comfort 21:10 Documentary 22:00 News in English 22:20 Poldark (drama)

MIDDLE EAST TV

14:00 The 700 Club 14:55 Film: The Cow and I - A French POW decides to escape to start a new life. Starring Jean-Francois Ferrel, Marguerite the Cow 18:30 Mighty Mouse 17:20 Dangerous 17:45 Superbook 18:10 Hart To Hart 18:10 Rescue 911 20:00 World News Tonight (Arab) 20:30 CNN Headline News 21:00 Wings 21:30 Matlock 22:20 Murder She Wrote 23:10 The 700 Club 00:00 Film: The Cow and I (rpt)

CABLE

FAMILY CHANNEL (3)

8:00 Local broadcast 9:00 Attitudes 9:45 The Young and the Restless 10:30 News in English 11:00 Major Dad 11:30 The 12th Step 12:15 Pasquale's Kitchen 12:40 Falcon Crest 13:35 Perfect Strangers 14:05 Young Indiana Jones 15:00 Trapper John 15:50 Murder She Wrote 16:40 The Powers That

STAR PLUS

7:30 Neighbors 8:00 Santa Barbara 8:30 The Bold and the Beautiful 9:30 Donahue 10:30 Oprah Winfrey 11:30 Today's Gourmet 12:00 Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood 12:30 Grimm's Fairy Tales 13:00 Force Five 13:30 Degassi Junior High 14:00 El Extreme Close Up 14:30 Neighbors 15:00 M*A*S*H 15:30 Doogie Howser, M.D. 16:00 Anything But Love 16:30 Moonlighting 17:30 The Bold and the Beautiful 18:00 Santa Barbara 19:00 Crystal Maze 20:00 Capital City 21:00 M*A*S*H 21:30 El Features 22:00 Neighbors 22:30 Crystal Maze 23:30 Capital City 00:30 Donahue

RADIO

VOICE OF MUSIC

6:06 Waking to Music 7:07 Thomas Arne: Trio sonata in D for flute, violin and continuo; Handel: Concerto Grosso in F

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS

8 Gail produced by fruit of two trees (3-5)
9 Dull work on a query that's not really heartless (6)
10 Old Bob came away from the huge tank (3)
11 Begin to act freely, relaxed after strike (3,5)
12 The following person organized the run (6)
13 National colours (3,5,3,4)
15 Removed spy with artistic skill able to exercise occult powers (7)
17 Slip near the wicketkeeper (7)
21 Local amenity in Brussels? (9,6)
24 Lay aside on the bookcase inconclusively (6)

DOWN

1 Fertiliser used by worker on the river (6)
2 Marsh plant? (6)
3 Is it on the other side of the seat of government? (10,5)
4 Greatly honoured but always in debt (7)
5 Completely different people have it (7,2,6)

SOLUTIONS

YESTERDAY'S QUICK SOLUTION
ACROSS: 1 Count, 4 Appoint, 8 Buffalo, 9 Lame, 10 Bats, 11 Bore, 12 Lame, 13 Taint, 14 Soot, 15 Soot, 16 Desired, 17 Famed, 18 Odium, 19 Biotic, 20 Elevate, 21 Small.
DOWN: 1 Cabaret, 2 Unfit, 3 Transit, 4 Arouse, 5 Prior, 6 Inspect, 7 Effect, 8 Ease, 14 Dire, 16 Hostile, 17 Effects, 19 Radical, 21 Edible, 22 Drone, 23 Rumba, 24 Malta.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 English poet (6)
4 Sharpens (6)
8 Mingled (5)
9 Tomato sauce (7)
10 Rumpus (7)
11 Norse deity (4)
12 Tag (3)
14 Adhesive (4)
15 Stout cord (4)
16 Flatfish (3)
21 Gambol (4)
23 City in N India (7)
25 Flatfish (7)
26 Two-legged animal (5)
27 Remorseful (5)
28 Not go outside (4,2)

DOWN

1 Recall (6)
2 Relating to vocabulary (7)
3 Concentrated (8)
4 - and kin (4)
5 Surplus (5)
6 Passive (6)
7 Completely broke (5)
13 Uncomplimentary remark (8)
16 Complete array (7)
17 German composer (6)
19 Air attack (6)
20 Nordic country (6)
22 Tooth (5)
24 Skillfully (4)

Cabinet likely to accept Ben-Eliezer's housing plan

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

THE cabinet is expected to approve Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer's plan to reduce soaring housing prices at a special session on Sunday, dedicated to solving the dispute between the Housing and Finance ministers over government-subsidized building.

Most cabinet ministers and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's director-general Shimon Sheves support Ben-Eliezer's position.

The bone of contention between Ben-Eliezer and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat is dubbed "the combination deal," the arrangement by which contractors earmark part of their construction for small, lower-priced apartments, in exchange for heavily reduced land prices from the government.

The two ministers met before the cabinet session yesterday and managed to agree on all points of the plan except "the combination deal," which they consequently took out of the plan and did not discuss at the cabinet meeting.

The plan is based on massive land marketing and building of at least 50,000 housing units annually in the central region, including subsidized government housing projects for low-income groups and those eligible for government housing aid.

According to "the combination deal," the contractors will receive land for 51% of its value, in turn allocating 50% of their construction to two-to-three room apartments of up to 80 square meters, half of which (25% of the whole) will be intended for those eligible for government aid.

The state, for its part, will make

a commitment to purchase 30% of these latter apartments for eligible people, constituting only some 7% of the overall building.

The ministers who support this arrangement believe that it is the only way to overcome the housing shortage.

Shohat and the Bank of Israel, on the other hand, maintain this is government intervention in the construction market, involving government grants which are not guaranteed to lead to any price reduction, and may end up augmenting the contractors' profits.

The rest of the plan worked out by Ben-Eliezer and Shohat consists of locating 10 plots in high-demand areas for immediate construction of 500 housing units each.

In addition, the housing minister and Israel Lands Administration would release land for at least 50,000 housing units a year by public tender. The tenders will not set a minimum price, and the building companies and entrepreneurs will be obliged by contract to build within four months and to complete construction and populate the buildings by a certain date.

The plan, which grants Ben-Eliezer exclusive authority to direct every stage, also includes importing foreign construction workers; clear criteria pertaining to environment protection; large allocations for infrastructure; incentives for contractors building private housing as well; and considerably increased mortgages according to differential criteria, with each family getting mortgages according to its needs.

KNESSET BRIEFS

Cohen suggests inviting Sha'ath to Knesset
Ran Cohen (Labor) suggested inviting senior PLO official Nabil Sha'ath to appear before the foreign affairs and defense committee, saying it was a way of learning about the PLO at first hand. Committee chairman Ori Orr firmly rejected the idea.

Likud slams vote delay
The Likud accused Labor of deliberately deceiving the Knesset when it called for the postponement of Monday's no-confidence debate out of respect for the Moslem and Druse MKs celebrating the Id al-Adha holiday. Katsav said that instead of coming to the Knesset, some of the absent MKs had participated in pro-Palestinian political rallies in the Gaza Strip.

Cohen scores prospect of re-taking Gaza
Ran Cohen (Meretz) took issue with a government statement issued Monday which could be understood to mean that Israel would recapture Gaza if the PLO violated the agreement with Israel. Cohen said the implementation of a military plan to recapture the area would be "stupid." According to a MK Aryeh Deri, the statement was drafted word for word by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and delivered by Moshe Shahal. Shahal said "any violation of the agreement will restore the situation to the status quo ante."

Panel asked to ban teachers from smoking
The Society for the Prevention of Smoking asked the Knesset war on drugs committee to recognize cigarettes as a "drug," ban the sale of cigarettes within three kilometers of all schools, and bar smoking in teachers' rooms.

Tuvia Lehrer and Amos Hausner of the society provided the committee with evidence from the US that tobacco companies there could remove nicotine from their products but decline to do so in order to make their more "addictive."

Prosecutor backs unlisting Degel Hatara
The State Prosecutor's Office supports canceling the listing of Degel Hatara as a political party, Talia Sasson, a representative of the office, told the Supreme Court yesterday.

The court was hearing law student Aviram Yitzhak's appeal of the registrar of political parties' decision to list Degel.

Yitzhak contends that Degel does not meet the criteria set by law, in that its by-laws are empty of content, providing unlimited power to the Council of Tora Sages.

Degel is to submit its brief soon.

Dan Izenberg and Judy Siegel

Knesset panel pledges to prepare health bill quickly

DAN IZENBERG

THE special committee to legislate a national health insurance bill met yesterday for the first time since Haim Ramon was elected to head the Histadrut and pledged to prepare the bill for final approval quickly.

Committee chairman Amir Peretz said the committee would begin voting on the clauses of the bill next week. Haim Oron (Meretz) warned that Kupat Holim Clalit would go bankrupt before the end of the month if the bill is not passed without delay.

Any obstacles to the bill's pas-

sage appeared to vanish last week, when Peretz announced that the Ramon Histadrut list was ready to accept a compromise suggested by Finance Minister Avraham Shohat on the controversial linkage and health tax collection clauses.

However, Labor faction chairman Eli Dayan told the committee his party has not yet decided whether to endorse the compromise which stipulates that non-Histadrut members be allowed to join Clalit and that the entire

health tax - and the supplementary 0.8 percent organization tax - be collected by the National Insurance Institute.

Dayan surprised committee members when he suggested that the organization tax, which is to go to the health fund owners, including the Histadrut, be cut in half.

Dayan, who supported a strong Histadrut when it was controlled by outgoing Secretary-General Haim Haberfeld, told the commit-

tee: "Since there is a new Histadrut administration which suggests efficiency and savings, we can cut the organization tax in half. After all, the tax collection offices will be closed and some trade unions will not need money at all."

Oron accused Dayan of advocating the cut to undermine the Histadrut because it had been taken over by Ramon. Other MKs suggested minor changes in a few of the bill's 75 clauses.

Both coalition and opposition MKs agreed that ultimately, however, it would be impossible to solve the health fund's problems without separating Kupat Holim from the Histadrut.

Gal said he would ask Finance Minister Avraham Shohat and acting Health Minister Yitzhak Rabin to report back to the committee on their plan of action within 10 days.

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Uzi Meshulam is greeted by one of his followers at Tel Aviv Magistrates Court yesterday.

(Alon Ron / Israel Sun)

Meshulam, 20 of his followers, remanded for 12 more days

RAINE MARCUS

AS Uzi Meshulam cried "Nazis" and "You stole our children" at a judge, police and reporters, the self-styled rabbi and 20 followers were remanded in custody for a further 12 days in Tel Aviv Magistrates Court yesterday.

Meshulam and his followers were arrested after holding up for two months in his Yehud home. Twenty followers were also released on bail yesterday.

The debate, in a packed and heavily guarded courtroom, with Judge Dan Arbel presiding, was constantly interrupted by singing, chanting and heated outbursts by Meshulam and his followers, who also claimed they had been brutally beaten by police.

"My twins were sold by you," shouted one man. Ora Shifris, Meshulam's spokesperson during the siege, and who was released Friday, sent

a note to an ITV reporter in the courtroom, accusing her of being one of the journalists responsible for the death of Shlomo Assoulin, shot dead by police during the raid after the latter fired at a police helicopter. "This is a result of your demonic work," Shifris wrote.

Police presented two films as evidence showing Meshulam and his followers, armed with pistols and M-16 assault rifles, parading down the streets and threatening to open fire.

"One man threw a firebomb at Tel Aviv police chief Gabi Last, and a disaster was narrowly averted," said a police representative. Followers also tried to run down residents in their cars, said police.

The presentation of police evidence was interrupted by Meshu-

lam, who yelled hysterically: "When I aim, I don't miss."

Outside the courtroom, hundreds of families and supporters screamed, chanted and argued with the massive forces of police brought in to keep order.

In arguing for the release of most of their clients lawyers Dr. Haim Misgav and Shmuel Fleishman argued that the charges were trumped up and did not warrant their clients' detention.

"The whole case has been dramatized out of proportion. The only bloodshed was caused by police," said Misgav, adding that Assoulin died because he did not get medical treatment on time. He asked Arbel to consider each case individually.

"Their behavior is a result of

police behavior and brutality," said Misgav, who after the decision said he would appeal to the District Court.

But a patient Arbel, who tried to calm the atmosphere several times, said that Meshulam's constant interruptions and lack of respect for the legal system only strengthened police remand extension requests.

In detaining 20 followers, Arbel determined that the group "acted as a group taking their orders from their leader."

"Even if their aim to campaign for an inquiry commission into the disappearance of Yemenite children was a legitimate one, their methods were illegal and endangered the public," said Arbel. "There is no doubt that if released the suspects will repeat their behavior."

Clalit's deficit to reach NIS 1.6b. this year

EVELYN GORDON

KUPAT Holim's deficit is expected to hit almost NIS 1.6 billion this year, outgoing Director-General Avigdor Kaplan told the Knesset finance committee yesterday.

Almost half of the projected NIS 1.579b. deficit - some NIS 707m. - is due to the public-sector wage increases granted by the government, Kaplan said. Another NIS 306m. is due to lower-than-expected income from the unitary tax (*mas ahid*): NIS 220m. is due to a sharp rise in government hospitalization fees; and NIS 120m. is due to drug prices, which have shot up 20 percent. Another NIS 150m. stems from investments made by the health fund, while NIS 76m. is due to its efforts to computerize.

Kaplan said that many of these factors are out of Kupat Holim's control. To make matters worse, he noted, the Histadrut had failed to give the fund almost NIS 200m. which it had promised as part of the recovery plan, while the government still owes the fund some NIS 40m.

Health Ministry Director-General Mordechai Shani added, however, that Kupat Holim doctors are paid about 25% more than other doctors, which costs the fund some NIS 80m. a year.

Shani told the committee that in light of Kupat Holim's financial crisis - its accumulated debt is NIS 3.3b. - the 4.8% health tax

proposed in the national health insurance bill would not be enough to keep the fund afloat. The tax must be raised to 5%-5.1%, he said.

In addition, he said, the fund needs an immediate injection of some NIS 300m. apiece from both the government and the Histadrut.

Committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor) warned that the committee would not approve any further government support unless the Histadrut contributed its share.

However, he added, the government must come up with some kind of solution immediately.

"Neither a coalition [agreement with Haim Ramon's list in the Histadrut] nor the national health bill will be able to influence what happens [to Kupat Holim] in 1994," he said. "This requires an immediate solution, because beyond the political argument, we are talking about two-thirds of the Israeli population."

Gal said he would ask Finance Minister Avraham Shohat and acting Health Minister Yitzhak Rabin to report back to the committee on their plan of action within 10 days.

Both coalition and opposition MKs agreed that ultimately, however, it would be impossible to solve the health fund's problems without separating Kupat Holim from the Histadrut.

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Shohat asks Kaplan to retract resignation

JUDY SIEGEL

FINANCE Minister Avraham Shohat yesterday asked Kupat Holim Clalit director-general Avigdor Kaplan to withdraw his resignation "in order to help bring the health fund through this difficult period."

The minister said he appreciated Kaplan's efforts to stabilize and improve the Histadrut health fund over the past 18 months, adding that the government "did all it could to help it along the road to recovery." Shohat noted that the national health insurance bill, if passed, would increase the amount of funds reaching Kupat Holim Clalit.

Kaplan announced his resignation on Monday, saying he could "no longer bear the heavy responsibility" of coping with Kupat Holim's heavy debts. He blamed the health fund's mounting NIS 1.5 billion deficit on reduced Histadrut funding, generous wage increases for health workers, and a 23 hike in the *per diem* hospitalization rate.

In a letter to Prime Minister and Acting Health Minister Yitzhak Rabin, regional Kupat Holim Clalit administrators said they were shocked by Kaplan's resignation. They expressed their support for Kaplan, "who advanced medical care while increasing efficiency through the use of responsible financial methods." They blamed the government and the Histadrut for the deteriorating financial condition of the health fund.

Meanwhile, sources in both the Health Ministry and Kupat Holim Clalit said that easing the Kupat Holim Clalit crisis had been made even more difficult by the fact that the ministry has lacked a health minister for some four months, since the resignation of Haim Ramon.

Sources close to Haim Ramon, secretary-general-designate of the Histadrut, hinted that Kaplan had resigned because he knew Ramon would not want him to continue in his post.

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Dirani's a 'hard nut to crack'

DAN IZENBERG and news agencies

SECURITY officials are having difficulty extracting information from abducted Lebanese Shi'ite terrorist Mustafa Dirani, Deputy General Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Amnon Shahak told the Knesset foreign affairs and defense committee yesterday.

"He's a hard nut to crack," a source who attended the meeting quoted Shahak as saying. "He was himself involved in interrogations so he knows what it's all about. He knows very well what we won't do to him."

Shahak admitted that Dirani had not told his interrogators any "amazing things we didn't know before. The investigation will continue for many days and many nights in order to find out everything he knows."

Shahak added that the interrogation had enabled Israel to find out more about the Believers' Resistance organization, which Dirani heads, its relations with other organizations, and their links with Iran.

The deputy chief of general staff rejected opposition charges that the government had ordered the abduction of Dirani at this time in order to divert public attention from Palestinian violence in the territories, including the killing of two soldiers at Erez Junction.

Shahak refused to answer a question by Aryeh Deri (Shas) as to why the army had waited so long to seize Dirani. "The disclosure of such information will cause harm," said Shahak.

In Lebanon yesterday, Hizbullah's leader called for the resignation of the Lebanese government for failing to block the abduction of Dirani.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, secretary-general of Hizbullah, also vowed to punish Israel for its act. Nasrallah accused the government of "incompetence" in dealing with Dirani's abduction.

"The least that could be done if there is a sense of responsibility and dignity is for the government and its head to resign immediately," Nasrallah told a news conference.

The Lebanese government, meanwhile, filed a complaint to the UN Security Council yesterday over the abduction. Foreign Minister Faris Bouez said.

IAF hits Hizbullah in south Lebanon

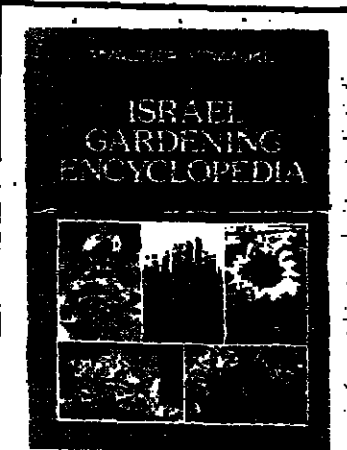
ALON PINKAS

AIR force jets yesterday attacked Hizbullah strongholds in south Lebanon yesterday after Hizbullah gunmen fired barrages of Katyusha rockets on the security zone. No casualties or serious damage was reported from the Katyusha attack.

An army statement said that jets attacked Hizbullah operations launchpads in an area "controlled by the organization."

The statement added that the pilots reported accurate hits on their designated targets, and that all planes returned safely to their base.

Eyewitnesses told news agencies that the jets made about five sorties.



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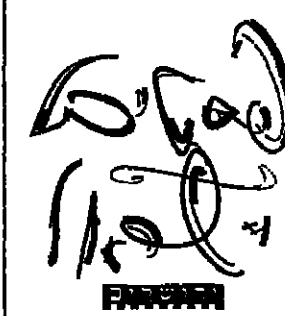
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